



**THE AZANIAN PEOPLE’S ORGANISATION: AN ANTI-APARTHEID STRUGGLE,
BLOEMFONTEIN, 1978-1994**

By

ELISHA MASILONYANE LEFUO

Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements in respect of the degree

PHILOSOPHIAE DOCTOR

in the

FACULTY OF THE HUMANITIES

(DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY)

at the

UNIVERSITY OF THE FREE STATE

BLOEMFONTEIN

SUPERVISOR: PROF C. TWALA

BLOEMFONTEIN

JULY 2024

DECLARATION

I, Elisha Masilonyane Lefuo declare that this PhD thesis entitled The Azanian People's Organisation: An anti-apartheid struggle, Bloemfontein, 1978-1994 is my own original work and independent work and has never been submitted at other institutions for assessment purposes. All sources used have been duly acknowledged and cited with notes and references.

Student: 1992277846

.....

Elisha Masilonyane Lefuo

.....

Date

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The study drew inspiration from the role played by many AZAPO's struggle activists in Bloemfontein (Mangaung), whose 'voices' need to be articulated in a scholarly way. It disputes the one-sided narrative that only certain liberation movements/organisations liberated the masses of the South Africans. Consequently, the study indicates their roles, despite the repressive approach by the apartheid regime and being undermined by other liberation movements/organisations. The study contributes to the liberation struggle history and attempts to address the research gap in this historiography.

The writing of this thesis required a multi-faceted series of skills, to most of which one can lay little claim. As a result, many debts of gratitude were incurred. Perhaps the first is to my supervisor, Prof Chitja Twala, for his unfailing patience and support whenever needed. His in-depth scholarly knowledge on the liberation studies is hereby acknowledged. He gave up hours of his time in patient discussions to make this task a successful undertaking. Although this was a tedious process, at the end it helped in improving the research and putting my findings into proper perspectives. Second, I wish to acknowledge and thank the family of the Black Consciousness Movement (BCM), the National Executive of AZAPO, the Provincial Executive of AZAPO in the Free State, the Bloemfontein Branch Executive, and all who participated in this research.

One owes enormous gratitude to Ms Carmen Nel in providing typing assistance. Her unfailing support is acknowledged. She deserves special thanks for her patience and administrative support. Thanks, are also due to Ms Pulane Xaba, former secretary of the Department of History for the facilitation of other administrative tasks from the side of the Department. Gratitude also goes to staff in the libraries and archives that one constantly visited whilst conducting research. I was fortunate to meet committed staff members at the institutions.

I hereby also thank my family members for their physical and spiritual support. A special thank you to my wife, Matshediso Lefuo for her unfailing support and encouragement. My children, Mpho Hoohlo Lefuo, Boipelo Bokgoni, LA Lefuo, Motseoa, Kamohelo, Ayanda, Zimela and Shoeshoe – you are never too old to broaden your horizons. Avoiding obfuscating my family

members and putting them at the penumbra, a special thanks goes to Gauta, Tseko, Masilo, and Memme.

Their words of encouragement to finalise this research project were fulfilling. As a fulltime educator, it was sometimes difficult to balance my research and work.

ABSTRACT

The main argument of this study is that the establishment of the Azanian People's Organisation (AZAPO) and its struggle for liberation in South Africa (SA) and Bloemfontein (Mangaung) was not unidirectional, as suggested by other liberation historians. Rather, the researcher argues that its existence was a consequence of dual agencies of repression and oppression, faced by many of the Black masses in South Africa. The study constructs its core argument in relation to the quiescence of academic literature on the role of AZAPO in the liberation struggle of SA, let alone places like Mangaung. In this study three main arguments are advanced in relation to the organisation's existence and contribution to the struggle for liberation. These arguments are adumbrated in the subsequent chapters, constituting this study.

The study also analyses why AZAPO in the Free State and especially in Mangaung has received little academic attention, as compared to other provinces and places. Furthermore, this study historicises the connections between how the regional structures of AZAPO identified with the rest of the country. To this end, AZAPO's activities in the Free State are used to show the spread of the movement's political might. To achieve this, a closer examination of archival materials and secondary sources presented in a narrative and chronological way, was undertaken. Through these sources, the movement's planned activities and mobilisation in the Free State, with specific focus on Mangaung, are highlighted.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this study to the entire Lefuo family and relatives. Those who are with us and those who went before, particularly my father, Justice and my mother, Elisa, and lastly, to the Almighty God.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ANC	African National Congress
ASSECA	Association for the Educational and Cultural Advancement of the Africa People of South Africa
AZANLA	Azanian People's National Liberation Army
AZAPO	Azanian People's Organisation
AZASCO	Azanian Students' Convention
AZASM	Azanian Student's Movement
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
BC	Black Consciousness
BCM	Black Consciousness Movement
BCMA	Black Consciousness Movement of Azania
BCP	Basotholand Congress Party
BECON	Black Education Convention
BLA	Black Local Authorities
BPA	Black Parents' Association
BPA	Black People's Association
BPC	Black People's Convention
BSSP	Black Students Study Project
BWF	Black Women's Federation
BYO	Border Youth Organisation
CAL	Cape Action League
CI	Christian Institute
COSAS	Congress of South African Students

CUSA	Council of Unions of South Africa
DISA	Digital Innovation South Africa
EYCO	Eastern Cape Youth Organisation
HBU	Historically Black Universities
IDAMARA	Inter-denominational African Ministers' Association of South Africa
JMB	Joint Matriculation Board
KUYCO	Kutloanong Youth Congress
MEC	Member of the Executive Council
MF	Minority Front
MK	Umkhonto weSizwe
MWA	Medupe Writers' Association
NECC	National Education Crisis Committee
NF	National Forum
NFC	National Forum Committee
NIHSS	National Institute of Humanities and Social Science
NP	National Party
NUSAS	National Union of South African Students
NYO	Natal Youth Organisation
PAC	Pan Africanist Congress of Azania
PAIGE	Patriotic African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde
PEBCO	Port Elizabeth Black Civic Organisation
SACBC	Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference
SACP	South African Communist Party
SADTU	South African Democratic Teachers' Union

SAIRR	South African Institute for Race Relations
SANNC	South African Native National Congress
SANSCO	South African National Students Congress
SASO	South African Students Organisation
SASOL	South African Synthetic Oil Limited
SB	Special Branch
SUBC	Soweto Urban Bantu Council
TYO	Transvaal Youth Organisation
UBCO	Uitenhage Black Civic Organisation
UBJ	Union of Black Journalists
UCDP	United Christian Democratic Party
UDF	United Democratic Front
UFH	University of Fort Hare
UFS	University of the Free State
UL	University of Limpopo
UOFS	University of the Orange Free State
UWC	University of the Western Cape
WYCO	Western Cape Youth Organisation
YACM	Young African Christian Movement
YARM	Young African Religious Movement
YWCA	Young Women's Christians Association

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Black theology from an African context and is, in this sense, distinct from American black theology and liberation theology, which has its roots in Latin America. Black Theology is the attempt of black people to come to terms, theologically, with their black situation. It seeks to interpret the Gospel of Jesus Christ so that the problem that black people find themselves in, makes sense.

Church Theology: It is a form of the theology of churches that sought to remain neutral and apolitical, regarding issues they perceived as ‘political’ in nature, of which apartheid was one such issue. The Churches that embodied Church Theology argued that the Gospel, and therefore the Church, does not and should not dabble in political matters. Although these churches may not have overtly supported apartheid, they clandestinely allowed the *status quo* to continue. This *status quo* maintained white privilege, thus maintaining a system that oppressed, caused injustice, and caused violence against those declared ‘non-white’.

State Theology: It is the theological justification of the *status quo* with its racism, capitalism and totalitarianism. State Theology is one of the primary political theologies that provided the theological justification for the apartheid ideology in South Africa. It blessed injustice, canonised the will of the powerful, and reduced the poor to passivity, obedience and apathy.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION	i
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	ii
ABSTRACT.....	iv
DEDICATION	v
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS.....	vi
DEFINITION OF TERMS	ix
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	x
CHAPTER ONE : INTRODUCTION AND JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY	1
1.1 Introduction	1
1.2 The focus of the study, political and historical context.....	5
1.3 Research problem	10
1.4 Literature review on AZAPO	10
1.5 Aims and objectives of the study.....	19
1.6 Research design and methodology	20
1.7 Value of the study.....	22
1.8 Ethical considerations.....	23
1.9 Delimitations of the study.....	24
1.10 Chapter layout	24
1.11 Conclusion.....	26
CHAPTER TWO : THE AZANIAN PEOPLE’S ORGANISATION (AZAPO): AN HISTORICAL OVERVIEW	27
2.1 Introduction	27
2.2 The formation of AZAPO: A national perspective.....	28
2.3 The formation of AZAPO: A regional perspective	40
2.4 The influence of Mozambique and Angola’s independence on the BC and later on the formation of AZAPO	42
2.5 AZAPO: Constitution and Policy	46
2.6 AZAPO and Anti-Charterist tendencies	47
2.7 AZAPO and the National Forum (NF)	49
2.8 Conclusion.....	52

CHAPTER THREE : THE IDEOLOGICAL UNDERPINNINGS DEFINING THE AZANIAN PEOPLE'S ORGANISATION	53
3.1 Introduction	53
3.2 AZAPO in the late 1970s: A period of intellectual and political curiosity.....	54
3.3 AZAPO: Constitution and Policy	57
3.3.1 Conscientise, Politicise and Mobilise Black workers	59
3.3.2 The BC and AZAPO's interpretation of religion as a liberation philosophy	63
3.4 How the 'arts and culture' assisted crafting AZAPO's identity	68
3.5 Written texts influenced BC and AZAPO leaders.....	73
CHAPTER FOUR : AZANIAN PEOPLE'S ORGANIZATION (AZAPO) IN THE FREE STATE AND BLOEMFONTEIN, MANGAUNG.....	76
4.1 Introduction	76
4.2 BC-aligned activities and AZAPO in the Free State towns and 'dorpies'.....	78
4.2.1 The extent of networking activities.....	82
4.2.2 The Bloemfontein's (Mangaung's) primary school pupils' activism.....	84
4.2.3 Secondary and Tertiary students' activism in pursuit of AZAPO's ideals	85
4.3 The Bloemfontein Student League (BSL) as the precursor to AZAPO in Mangaung	101
4.3.1 The turn to AZAPO and its political trajectory in Mangaung.....	113
4.4 Conclusion.....	124
CHAPTER FIVE : AZANIAN PEOPLE'S ORGANIZATION (AZAPO) AND THE EXPERIENCES OF BLOEMFONTEIN (MANGAUNG) POLITICAL ACTIVISTS	126
5.1 Introduction	126
5.2 Contextualizing AZAPO's activists' stories in Mangaung	127
5.3 Political influence and circumstances detailing the arrests of political activists in Mangaung: Through the eyes of AZAPO's activists	129
5.4 Conclusion.....	149
CHAPTER SIX : CONCLUDING REMARKS AND EVALUATION OF THE STUDY	150
SOURCE LIST	157
LETTER FROM LANGUAGE EDITOR.....	177

CHAPTER ONE :

INTRODUCTION AND JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

The study investigated the role played by the Azanian People's Organisation (AZAPO) in the Free State, with special reference to Bloemfontein (Mangaung).¹ Here, the researcher contends that for this study to be fully understood, it needed to be positioned within the broader liberation struggle history of South Africa (SA). Further, elucidation was made through the study in challenging the widely held view and dominant historical narrative in SA's liberation struggle historiography, namely, that of the African National Congress (ANC) and its alliance partners having been the only organisations that fought for the country's freedom and liberation. Thus, the study sought to reverse the historical marginalisation of organisations, such as AZAPO from the mainstream historiography of the country's liberation struggle history.

The study also attempted to challenge the myopic viewpoint that the Free State as a region and particularly Bloemfontein (Mangaung)² as a struggle locale, had little influence on the broader national discourse of the liberation struggle. In hindsight, the above analysis and elusive justification undermines the availability of scholarly works, such as the ones indicating Bloemfontein as the founding venue of the two most significant political parties, which dominated the politics of the country for some time, namely, the African National Congress (ANC), which was then referred to as the South African Native National Congress (SANNC) when it was founded in 1912 and the National Party (NP), established in 1914.

In challenging the above, this study departed from the premise that in the Free State, there has been to a certain extent, a 'neglect' by historians to document the history of AZAPO, the significant role played by its student wing, the Azanian Student Movement (AZASM), the impact of its military wing, the Azanian People's National Liberation Army (AZANLA), in the politicisation and challenging the atrocities of the National Party's regime since their foundations until 1994. As

¹ For this study, reference is made to Bloemfontein rather than Mangaung, because the latter now includes the Townships of Thaba Nchu and Botshabelo as the Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality. In the past, Mangaung was the Bloemfontein Township excluding the above-mentioned townships.

² Bloemfontein (Mangaung), henceforth referred to as Mangaung.

this study attests, since 1978, although little has been documented about the history of this organisation, available scholarly literature points to directions that AZAPO occupied the South African political space and agreed on a strategy or strategic revamp of the country's politics. The organisation fully adopted some basic principles, aligned to the liberation struggle, namely, working towards a society with a common education system for all, working closely with all the black workers, and opposing all government created institutions and ethnic-orientated organisations. Like many other organisations or movements destined to fight the apartheid regime, its leadership was conscious of the possible repression from the regime. Coupled with the above, is the subtle role played by women in the organisation's structures, something that deserves academic scrutiny in this study.

These principles, as highlighted here, confirm that AZAPO was grounded as a nationalist liberation organisation, thus, its role in Mangaung should not be viewed in isolation from other political developments elsewhere in the country, be from other organisations/movements and aligned parties or from within its structures. In advancing this liberation course, one tends to agree with John Kane-Berman (insert source here) that AZAPO's establishment was behaving within the context of the NP's reaction towards black resistance to apartheid, especially during the political epoch when the Black Consciousness (BC) philosophy was at its acme in South Africa.³

Strini Moodley, one-time National Publicity Secretary of AZAPO wrote: 'AZAPO is in the business of liberating black people. In that context it focuses its attention on black people only ... Our point of departure is that white racism is the source of all black people's woes ... Over the centuries racism has damaged the collective black psyche so seriously that the psychological chains of servitude cut deeply into our self-image as men and women. Thus, AZAPO sees black consciousness as the most potent weapon in the struggle for liberation'.⁴

Furthermore, Moodley addressed the plight of women in the struggle for liberation by stating: 'AZAPO sees it as a natural process of liberation to break the chains of psychological oppression so that women by demonstrating their self-reliance make their mark on the struggle ... AZAPO believes that black women are a crucial lynchpin in achieving solutions. For this reason, AZAPO's women's secretariat and its women's formation, *Imbeleko*, are at the forefront at working for peace

³ J. Kane-Berman, *Soweto: Black Revolt, White Reaction* (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1978), p. 108.

⁴ S. Moodley, 'AZAPO', *Agenda: Special Issue: Emancipation and Liberation*, 20 April 2011, p. 35.

in the townships.’⁵ With the above statements, it was clear that AZAPO wanted to play in the national stage of the country’s struggle for liberation, despite all the challenges and setbacks experienced by other liberation organisations/movements, which waged the liberation struggle prior to its founding.

The study comes after the backdrop of regional studies, which appear to be significant. It is shown in this study that in-depth academic work conducted on organisations, such as AZAPO at the regional sphere, can have what one describes as the three major benefits. Firstly, they provide the opportunity, through detailed analysis, to display the existing diversity of political engagements through different organisations/movements in the communities. With this approach, this becomes an enabling platform for the construction of a ‘history from below’, something that has been missing in the country’s liberation historiography.

Secondly, this assists with the possibility to deconstruct and refute some of the generalisations made about certain communities’ involvement in the struggle for liberation. In this case, the focus on Mangaung will add value to understanding the nuances of AZAPO’s role from the local sphere of political operations. Significant with this approach, is that it helps with the construction of history from the point of view of ‘ordinary people’ that is not always possible in macro-level studies.

Thirdly, the fact that this study was undertaken somewhat 30 odd years after AZAPO’s establishment, provided the researcher ample time to glance back in historicizing this topic. This glance of the past, regarding AZAPO nationally, regional and at the local sphere, is embedded within the bigger frame of liberation history scholarship that translated into the post-apartheid era after 1994. With the above said, AZAPO’s liberation history remained a powerful presence in the country’s liberation historiography. In this context, AZAPO’s historical representation has come to reflect and reproduce another dimension on the struggle the country’s liberation, amidst the one-sided view that only a single liberation movement ushered freedom and democracy in SA after 1994.

The study was motivated by, among other considerations, an interest in realizing that no academic work has been undertaken whereby the role of AZAPO at the local level was investigated. A book

⁵ *Ibid.*

edited by Hilary Sapire and Chris Saunders ponders on important aspects of the liberation struggle, but fails to acknowledge roles, such as the one by AZAPO. Although it provides a set of new perspectives on the many liberation struggles in southern Africa and the current continuing significance, it is a collection of essays, highlighting the complex nature of these struggles, as well as their local and global legacies. The essays bring together detailed research on the trans-regional and trans-national aspects of the wider struggles for freedom in the region.⁶

However, the researcher is cognizant of the fact that the history of AZAPO in Mangaung cannot be extensively written without tapping into the broader AZAPO's activities nationally. Therefore, in this study, reference was made to the spread of AZAPO's political activities in Mangaung and how the community leaders of this area responded to that. Not much has been written about the history of AZAPO in a manner which presents an integrated picture of the movement in Mangaung. This regional perspective on AZAPO, with specific reference to Mangaung, shows that it was an important role-player during the struggle for liberation. The study shows that without a complete story of AZAPO, even from the regional level, it would be difficult to conclude a credible story on the national liberation in SA.

The study forms part of the critical academic work on township politics in SA. As mentioned here above, through this study, an attempt was made to address the much-held one-sided narrative that certain political organisations/movements liberated most of the South Africans from the apartheid yoke. This was expressed and perpetuated by Sapire and Saunders in their introductory chapter of their book when stating: '... Indeed, most of the chapters focus on the region's oldest nationalist and liberation movement in the 1960s, the ANC could by the end of the 1970s boast international credibility ...'⁷

As explicated here underneath, the study interrogated the existing literatures that still perpetuates the narrow explanation that AZAPO could not galvanize like other political movements, because of its 'intellectual approach' to political issues in SA, thus, failing to appeal to the masses. Although there are some elements of truth in the above statement, this study shows that such a statement could be misleading as there were other positives, which emanated from AZAPO, which made it to a force to be reckoned with in the country's political space. To fully comprehend this

⁶ For more information see the chapters in H. Sapire and C. Saunders (eds.), *Southern African Liberation Struggles: New local, regional, and global perspectives*, (Cape Town: UCT Press, 2013).

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

section of the study, reference was made to organisations/movements, such as the BC, the United Democratic Front (UDF)⁸ and many others, which had an influence on the activities of AZAPO.

1.2 The focus of the study, political and historical context

Readers of this study will quickly become aware that it fills an important gap in the SA liberation historiography. It explores relationships between the national structures of the organisation with the local ones and in this instance, reference was made to Mangaung. No similar study exists in the organisation of more than three decades of its existence. The subsequent sections of this chapter show that, during and post-apartheid years, historians paid little attention to the history of AZAPO. On the above status quo and generally critiquing the themes and historiographies of the histories of liberation studies, Reinhart Kossler wrote that there are historiographical distinct imbalances with respect to the histories of liberation movements within the region. He explains that the differences in the size and richness of historiographies across the region arise from distinctive national historiographical and intellectual traditions, as well as from the different trajectories and patterns taken by the individual liberation struggles over time.⁹

Here the researcher shares the same sentiments by Kwandiwe Kondlo, whereby, when writing about the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania (PAC), stated: ‘It was in wake of African National Congress’ (ANC) victory in the 1994 elections, South Africa had a sudden need to understand the organisation, structure and history of movements long excluded from the narrative of the nation’s past. Professional historians and participants in the struggle soon produced a wave of articles, books and reflections on the liberation movements that had become political parties overnight’.¹⁰

⁸ The formation and the launch of the United Democratic Front (UDF) in August 1983 was attended by delegates of 565 organisations, 400 of which were already affiliates at the regional level, whilst almost all the others were to affiliate thereafter. These organisations comprised of diverse groups in geographical and social terms. What united them was more than their common opposition to the state’s reforms. The UDF distinguished its affiliates in terms of sectors, namely, students, youth, civics, women, religious, political, and other. For information see J. Seekings, *The UDF: A History of the United Democratic Front in South Africa, 1983-1991*, (Cape Town, Oxford, Athens: David Philip, James Currey and Ohio University Press, 2000), p. 59. See also G. Houston, ‘The United Democratic Front: A case study of democratic organisation, 1983-1987’, *PhD Thesis*, University of Natal, Durban, 1998; G. Houston, *The National Liberation Struggle in South Africa: A case study of the United Democratic Front, 1983-87*, (Cape Town: HSRC, 1999).

⁹ R. Kossler, ‘Images of history and the nation: Namibia and Zimbabwe compared’, *South African Historical Journal*, 62(1), 2010, pp. 29-53.

¹⁰ K. Kondlo, *In the twilight of the revolution: The Pan-Africanist Congress of Azania (South Africa), 1959-1994*, (Switzerland: Basler Afrika Bibliographien, 2009), pp. xi-xii.

He further lamented: ‘When historians mentioned the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC), it was often to dismiss the ‘fratricidal tensions and opportunism’ that beset the movement, almost from its beginning’.¹¹ Sapire and Saunders also confirmed the above focus on the ANC’s history that this was due to the fact that the movement emerged as the premier liberation movement, which was measured in terms of institutional capacity, alliances, as well as international credibility in SA, thus scholars tended to concentrate on it rather than the ANC.¹² This old myth of course, shaped the historical consciousness of the post-apartheid history scholars to challenge this narrative. The same could be said about the approaches in writing the history of AZAPO. More of this is discussed in the sub-section dealing with a literature review on AZAPO.

The study traced the early formation of AZAPO branches, ideological orientations, political networks, and its *modus operandi*. It further discusses the discourse of liberation philosophy, underpinned through AZAPO’s influences. The study acknowledges that, there is no way one could interrogate the philosophical thoughts espoused by AZAPO without engaging with the BC philosophy. While the study examined the structural factors informing liberation struggles across the country, these influences also reverberated in Mangaung and the Free State Province, hence, the study focused on this region. With this study, AZAPO’s intra-organisational dynamics within its structures in Mangaung was given attention. As mentioned here above: to fully comprehend the role of AZAPO, it is important to highlight the influences and impact of the BC philosophy on the formation and activities of AZAPO.

Although the study is not about BC, its ideological influence on AZAPO could not be left unattended. As posited by Mbulelo Mzamane, Bavusile Maaba and Nkosingithi Biko, through the writings in the *SASO Newsletter* and other BC publications, along with creative writing, the BC constituted an unprecedented intellectual legacy in SA.¹³ The BC emerged as a powerful philosophy that wholly embraced the concept of black people as ‘more than appendages to white society’.¹⁴ Writing on BC in her book, *White Power and the Rise and Fall of the National Party*, Christi van der Westhuizen states that Steve Biko became the leading voice of his organization.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, xii.

¹² Sapire and Saunders, p. 8.

¹³ M.V. Mzamane, B.B. Maaba and N. Biko, ‘The Black Consciousness Movement in South Africa, 1970-1980’, in South African Democracy Education Trust (ed.), *The Road to Democracy in South Africa*, vol. 2, (1970-1980), (Pretoria: UNISA Press, 2006), pp. 99-101.

¹⁴ N. Worden, *The making of Modern South Africa: Conquest, Segregation, and Apartheid*, (Oxford: Blackwell, 1994), p. 117.

Despite the clampdown on those who supported BC by the apartheid agents, however, the voices, such as that of Biko, reverberated even after his death at the hands of the security forces.¹⁵

Thus, as an intellectual movement, leaders of AZAPO were equally influenced by this intellectualism. The authors mentioned here above, note that the Black Consciousness Movement (BCM) went through the following four phases, namely: ‘the breakaway from the National Union of South African Students (NUSAS)¹⁶ in 1967 to the formal launch in mid-1969 was a period of gestation; the period from the launch of the South African Student Organisation (SASO) in July 1969 to the banning of eight prominent BC exponents in March 1973 was marked by consolidation and was also the heyday of adults. The BC ideas also began to transform the thinking of adults. The period from the banning of BC leaders in March 1973 to the banning of the 18 important organisations subscribing to the ideology of BC in October 1977 saw its further spread as a mass movement. The post 1977 period was when it was no longer as driven to perpetrate its ideals of self-reliance’.¹⁷ To this effect, Steven McDonald writes that AZAPO was the political home of BCM and heir to the organisations that were banned by the apartheid regime in 1977. He further states: ‘Black Consciousness is more a philosophy than an ideology and, while it has always had organisational ramifications, it was never an organisation as such... Black Consciousness began

¹⁵ C. van der Westhuizen, *White Power and the Rise and Fall of the National Party*, (Cape Town: Zebra Press, 2007), p. 103.

¹⁶ The National Union of South African Students’ (NUSAS) membership was drawn from white English-medium higher education institutions, which has a track record of being a vocal opposition to apartheid. Initially its ideology was linked to the ‘student syndicalism’ of Whites with aspirations to advance the liberation course. When it started, NUSAS was involved in protesting activities and criticisms were levelled against it for that. It was after 1977 when it changed its tactics and embarked on programmes, such as organizing seminars, publications and using the media platforms to issue its relevance and appeal to the broader student population. From 1977, it aimed at fostering education programmes and distribution of constructive ideas. One of the criticisms was that NUSAS concentrated a lot on the ideas of ‘White Africanism’ at the institutions of higher learning at the time. For more information on NUSAS see M. Legassick and C. Saunders, ‘Aboveground activity in the 1960s’, in South African Democracy Education Trust (ed.), *The Road to Democracy in South Africa*, vol. 1, (1960-1970), (Cape Town: Zebra Press, 2004), pp. 679-683; University of Cape Town Manuscripts and Archives (UCTMA) BC 586, NUSAS, B1, Congress 1969 (1) President’s and Vice-President’s Report; M. Legassick and J. Shingler, ‘South Africa’, in D.K. Emmerson, *Students and Politics in Developing Nations*, p. 128; UCTMA BC 586, NUSAS, B1, Congress 1977 (iii) Minutes of 55th Congress, UNP, 25-30 November 1977, Resolution 23/78, p. 14; UCTMA, NUSAS, B1, Congress 1977 (iii) Minutes of 55th Congress, UNP, 25-30 November 1977, Report of Wits SRC President for 1977, p. 114.

¹⁷ Mzamane, Maaba and Biko, pp. 100-101. See also V. Maphai, ‘The role of Black Consciousness in the liberation struggle’, in I. Liebenberg, B. Nel, F. Lortan and G. van der Westhuizen (ed.), *The Long March: The story of the struggle for liberation in South Africa* (Pretoria: Penrose Book Printers, 1994), pp. 125-137; A. Habib, ‘The rise of Black Consciousness in South Africa’, *Race*, XV, 1973; R. Fatton Jr, *Black Consciousness in South Africa – The dialectics of ideological resistance to white supremacy* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1986); B. Pityana, M. Ramphela, M. Mpumlwana, and L. Wilson (eds.), *Bounds of possibility – The legacy of Steve Biko and Black Consciousness* (Cape Town: David Philip, 1991); A. Stubbs, *Steve Biko – I write what I like: A selection of his writings* (New York: Harper and Row, 1986).

to emerge as an identifiable philosophy in the late 1960s, reaching its peak of public recognition and organisational adherence in the early mid-1970s'.¹⁸

In their paper, delivered by Biko and Barney Pityana during a students' conference held in Cape Town in January 1971, they remarked the following about the BC philosophy: 'The call for Black Consciousness is the most positive call to come from any group in the black world for a long time. It is more than just a reactionary rejection of whites by blacks. The quintessence of it is the realisation by blacks that, to feature well in this game of power politics, they have to use the concept of group power and build a strong foundation for this'. With this, it was clear that the BC expressed group pride amongst the black people.

The periodisation of the study to capture the period 1978 to 1994 has historical significance for the following reasons. It was in 1978 when the idea of having an organisation, such as AZAPO was born. Between the years 1978 to 1994, the organisation grew and influenced the politics of the country. It should be noted that the 1970s saw a growth of organisations associated with BC activities among Blacks.¹⁹ The study's cut-off date of 1994 signifies the end of apartheid and ushering democracy in SA after the April 1994 elections, thus, political formations, such as AZAPO lost its vibrancy for political survival.

Referring to the period 1990 to 1994, Kondlo puts it: 'It was indeed a period of stress for liberation movements such as the PAC and the Black Consciousness Movement of Azania, later absorbed into AZAPO'.²⁰ The study looked at this period to understand how AZAPO activists in Mangaung were executed. In October 1983, AZAPO held its national council meeting in Cape Town, which was attended by some delegates from Mangaung. In this historical meeting, AZAPO resolved to intensify its campaign against the forthcoming elections for local government. All branches were encouraged to participate in the campaign to reject what the organisation referred to as the

¹⁸ S. McDonald, 'A Guide to Black Politics in South Africa', *CSIS Africa Notes*, 36, 5 November 1984, p. 3.

¹⁹ The first half of the 1970s, activists became involved in establishing or reviving a range of organisations in which thousands of people became active. In 1970, the South African Students' Organisation (SASO) held a conference in Wentworth, Durban, where it laid the foundations of the philosophy, which became known as Black Consciousness. This philosophy was later developed by Steve Biko in the following years. Also, by 1970, SASO leaders began to ponder the possibility of launching an 'adult' wing. In the 1970s also, particularly in December 1972, the Black People's Convention (BPC) held its inaugural conference at Hammanskraal, north of Pretoria. The principal aim of the BPC was to 'unite all South African Blacks into a political movement, which would seek liberation and emancipation of Black people from both psychological and physical oppression. For more see Mzamane, Maaba and Biko, 'The Black Consciousness Movement in South Africa, 1970-1980', p. 134.

²⁰ Kondlo, *In the twilight of the revolution ...*, pp. 4-5.

‘Pretoria’s New Deal’.²¹ This ‘Pretoria’s New Deal’ is discussed in the subsequent chapters of this study.

Furthermore, in its focus, the study noted that after September 1984, the struggle changed shape in many ways, with AZAPO arguing that the struggle for liberation should not be reduced to ‘bread and butter’ issues, confronting the communities, but agitated for the promotion for what the organisation referred to as the ‘pride of the black people’. Therefore, during this period, the issue of ‘blackness’ became the rallying point. Although grassroots issues, such as the challenges of the Black Local Authorities (BLA),²² the rent increases, and unemployment, stayed vitally important to sustainable zeal within the struggle, for AZAPO the main challenge was that of changing the mind-set of the black people not to despise themselves.

In this study, the role of AZASM in Bloemfontein was highlighted. AZASM was instrumental in recruiting the youth and students into AZAPO and embarked on campaigns to propagate the BC’s philosophy of being ‘Pro-Black’, which was embraced by the organisation.²³ Therefore, the BC philosophy became one of identity and liberation. It provided a clear political motif activating and encapsulating the material conditions and experiences of ‘Black life’ in an ‘anti-Black’ society (apartheid). Hence, BCM and AZAPO adopted a critical standpoint of ‘negative thinking’, which ‘negates’ existing forms of thought and reality from the perspective of higher possibilities.²⁴ Here, one views the ‘Black life’ and ‘anti-Black’ theses as analytical concepts that make intuitive sense to those, who subscribed to the fundamental principles of AZAPO.

However, in the context of this study, this line of argument and analysis can be regarded slippery to grasp and disaggregate, because of numerous and mutually exclusive functions. Thus, this study employed ‘anti-Black’ as a process of negating the existence of ‘Blackness’ in the social strata.

²¹ M.V. Mzamane and B.B. Maaba, ‘The Azanian People’s Organisation, 1977-1990,’ in South African Democracy Education Trust (ed.), *The Road to Democracy in South Africa*, vol. 4, Part 2, (1980-1990), (Pretoria: UNISA Press, 2010), pp. 679-683.

²² The Black Local Authorities Act provided for the replacement of the community councils that existed in the African Townships by Black Local Authorities (BLAs) that were presented as additional ‘political rights’ for urban Africans. These BLAs were viewed as politically autonomous and with wider powers than the community councils. Ironically, the BLA was to challenge the local issues, including the increases of rent, which led to the rent boycotts in many townships, however, for them to be sufficiently self-financing, were forced to increase rents and service charges to raise revenue. For more information, see M. Chaskalson, K. Jochelson and J. Seekings, ‘Rent Boycotts and the Urban Political Economy’, in G. Moss and I. Obery (eds.), *South African Review*, 4, (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1987).

²³ Wits University Historical papers, William Cullen Library, A2675, Karis Gerhart Collection: Historical and Literary Papers, University of the Witwatersrand.

²⁴ H. Marcuse, *One-dimensional Man: Studies in the ideology of advanced industrial society* (Pacifica, CA: Marxists Internet Archive, 1964), p. xiv.

One other important concept in this study, is that of being ‘Pro-Black’, which the research argued represents selected alternatives or variants of identification with ‘Blackness’, categorisation, and commonality/groupness, in its analysis of AZAPO’s history. Consequently, ‘Pro-Black’ entails ‘one’s sense of who one is, of one’s social location, and how such a person is prepared to act in relation to such social and political connections’.

1.3 Research problem

It is regrettable that the available historiography of the liberation struggle in the Free State is skewed towards the ANC, with less emphasis on organisations, such as AZAPO. There is a dearth of written sources on the activities of AZAPO in the Free State and Mangaung in general, yet oral history is awash with stories of the organisations activists’ roles in the struggle for liberation. This happened, despite the geographical location of the Free State, that no political party’s activism could have been missed by the province’s people. The centrality of the Free State made it of strategic significance for political activism. The researcher contends in this study that if the provincial activities of AZAPO remain undocumented, the oral histories may die with the storytellers and later there will be no recount of their role in liberating SA. Therefore, the continuous marginalisation of AZAPO’s Free State role gives an unfair assumption that the organisation had no footprints in the Province and Mangaung. This, in hindsight, gives a minimalistic view of the Province’s/City’s role in the liberation struggle. This marginalisation ignores the convenience of the political activists of the large pool. As mentioned before, this further undermines the strategic geophysical location of the province. With this study, the history of AZAPO at the local level, was investigated with the aim of challenging the failure by SA’s liberation historians to fully acknowledge this organisation as having played a critical role in the country’s struggle for liberation apartheid bondage. For these reasons, it is impossible to downplay the role of AZAPO.

1.4 Literature review on AZAPO

For reasons known to the SA historians and those associated with the history of the ANC, the movement’s history is arguably the most documented. As shown in this section, several scholars

have driven this narrative forward with cutting edge perspectives, but with less concentration on other liberation movements. Due to these seminal contributions, it is easy to believe research topics in the field are now spent, with no new additions necessary or even possible. This study argues that, on the contrary, AZAPO's contribution could open more room for asking novel questions on the country's liberation historiography.

AZAPO played a pivotal role in shaping the political discourse in SA. This section aims at analysing the existing historiography on AZAPO and other liberation or political organisations in the Free State and the country. This helps in identifying the major themes on AZAPO's role, thus showing the nature, trend, appeal, and impact of it on the Black majority. The selection of texts for review was influenced by the passion to reveal a research gap in the liberation struggle's historiography. Given that this is a qualitative study that focuses on AZAPO, different texts and literature related to this organisation and other like-minded ones were consulted. Documents reviewed were mainly secondary sources, like published books and peer-reviewed journal articles. Primary sources, including oral interviews, as well as original documents, such as the minutes of the meetings of AZAPO, were also consulted. The latter were used to complement secondary texts for maintaining the validity of this research. It was prudent to interrogate general texts on the SA liberation struggle to appreciate the landscape in which AZAPO operated in, whilst at the same time acknowledging a research gap existing.

This section explores the contexts within which AZAPO came into existence, the country's political climate and historical consciousness at the time. As mentioned previously, studies on AZAPO as an organisation or in passing have been undertaken by different scholars in SA, depending on their focus areas. In the process of recounting the history of AZAPO in this study, the researcher became aware of the temptations of praising the organization but subjected it to a thorough and penetrating analysis. The history of AZAPO from the national to the regional levels, is filled with trials and tribulations, whereby the movement attempted to occupy the political space during the late 1970s and early 1980s. A careful analysis of the challenges emanating from the ideological differences with other liberation movements is scrutinised. However, in this study one was careful to describe the ways in which AZAPO built itself to be distinct from others.

By their own admission on the role of AZAPO in the liberation struggle and the relative 'neglect' on this kind of history from those who wrote about the struggle in the post-apartheid era, Gregory

Houston et al., in the book titled: *The other side of Freedom: Stories of hope and loss in the South African liberation struggle 1950-1994*, note: ‘The activities of the Azanian People’s Organisation are also dealt with in some interviews’.²⁵ This was rather a condescending approach to acknowledging AZAPO’s role in the liberation struggle. It was clear from the above statement that much scope was dedicated to other liberation movements and with little attention to AZAPO.

Although not purely focusing on AZAPO, Sethuthuthu Lucky Vuma’s MA dissertation provides the much-needed information on this topic. The study is about student activism at the University of the North (now University of Limpopo) from 1968 to 1994. Vuma’s assessment is that this period was characterized by an upsurge of the nationalist struggle in South Africa. Here, he acknowledges the role played by different organisations, including AZAPO and AZASO.²⁶ Vuma went to complete his PhD in 2022 on almost a similar topic where he investigated the complex changes and transformation in student activism at the same University tackling the period 1968 to 2015, incorporating new information as compared to his MA dissertation.²⁷

Although the above-mentioned study was about UL during that period, there were many students who hailed from the Free State, who studied there in the early 1970s, but no mention was made of them taking the struggle to their respective communities outside Turfloop. In the same vein, Ayanda Sphelele Ndlovu’s MA dissertation acknowledges that there are numerous accounts on the liberation movements, including the roles played by Robert Mangaliso Sobukwe and Steve Bantubonke Biko. Here, Ndlovu pertinently questions the quiescence of scholarly works and lack of academic interrogation on the philosophical contributions of these two political leaders in the struggle for liberation.²⁸

In one of his many articles, Ndumiso Dladla unpacks the concept of Azania. The article is also a critique of the idea of South Africa and the reality it has been producing from the perceptive of Azanian critical philosophy. He notes that the name, Azania, was introduced to the South African political lexicon by the PAC of Azania. According to the PAC, Azania is ‘the true name of the

²⁵ G. Houston, et al, *The other side of Freedom: Stories of hope and loss in the South African liberation struggle 1950-1994* (Cape Town: HSRC Press, 2017), p. 5.

²⁶ S.L. Vuma, ‘The role played by the University of the North student activism in the struggle against apartheid from 1968 to 1994’, *MA Dissertation*, University of Limpopo, Polokwane, 2018.

²⁷ S.L. Vuma, ‘An historical examination of the evolution of student activism at the University of Limpopo (formerly known as the University of the North), 1968 to 2015, *PhD Thesis*, University of Limpopo, Polokwane, 2022.

²⁸ A.S. Ndlovu, ‘The philosophical contribution of Robert Sobukwe and Steve Biko to the liberation struggle in South Africa’, *MA Dissertation*, University of the Free State, Bloemfontein, 2022.

territory that has been called South Africa since the South African Act 1909 of British Parliament, which established the Union of South Africa in 1910'.²⁹ According to Dladla, Azania should be understood as the ends to which Africanist ideology and liberation philosophy were aimed. Important features of the desired Azania, included the following: the insistence by Azanians that the objective of the liberation struggle was the recovery of the sovereign title to territory; the insistence that the title to territory itself belongs exclusively to the indigenous people conquered in the unjust wars of colonialism; the rejection of multiracialism; the recognition of 'South Africa' as a polity and idea inextricably bound to the will of the conqueror.³⁰ The above, as highlighted by Dladla, was an indication of the spread of Azanian philosophy, which appealed to the Black Consciousness Movement of Azania (BCMA) and later AZAPO. Although not addressing the history of AZAPO, in one of his many articles, Dladla explains that South Africa by its nature is a 'philosophical problem' for indigenous people.

Mogobe Ramose explains: 'African philosopher would at the very minimum be arguing for the liberation of African philosophy from the yoke of dominance and enslavement under the European (Western) epistemological paradigm'.³¹ This section of the chapter aims at critically reviewing the literature that provides the academic foundations of this study. It focuses firstly on what has been academically and scholarly documented on AZAPO generally, and later with reference to the Free State. It provides a critical description and analysis of scholarly works on the broader liberation struggle in the Free State. Secondly, it explores the body of archival materials on AZAPO and how this is relevant to the organisation's activities in the Free State.

The researcher's point of departure into the state of research on AZAPO in the context of research infrastructure, is the availability of sources on AZAPO. The researcher observed with dismay the relative absence of AZAPO's history to retain a noticeable presence in SA. This happens despite much political mobilisation and organisational-building and ongoing research on the history of the liberation struggle in SA. Based on available literature and the intense research (albeit with challenges) to reconstruct the history of AZAPO, the study itself had, in the context of its activities in Mangaung, explored its challenges, the shifts and contestation for political space.

²⁹ N. Dladla, 'The liberation of history and the end of South Africa: Some notes towards an Azanian historiography in Africa, South', *South African Journal on Human Rights*, 34(3), 2018, pp. 2018, pp. 461-417.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 417-418.

³¹ M.B. Ramose, *African Philosophy Through Ubuntu* (Mond Books, 1999), p. 37.

In this study, the researcher acknowledged the minimal literature available on AZAPO. This research work has evolved from historical to contemporary political order and is often used as resistance narratives. This study's historicisation of AZAPO activities and identities resonates with Jeremy Seekings' analysis of the complex ambiguities of studying township politics. Following this logic by Seekings, in this study the researcher situated AZAPO with the regional context of the Mangaung Township. As mentioned before, this should be understood within the broader struggle waged by AZAPO elsewhere in the country.

Seekings polemically distinguishes between two trends in the study of township politics in the 1980s. The first strand is the structural approach, which privileged the political economy of township resistance. It focused on residents' material grievances as the most important factor driving township protests. However, Seekings remarks that the weakness of this approach is that it gave little credence to the role by other organizations, such as AZAPO, which were not Congress-aligned.³² As it is shown in the subsequent chapters of this study, in others, the political agency of AZAPO was undermined. While steering away from voluntarist notions of political activism and township politics, it is nonetheless argued in this study that the lacuna in a structuralist account neglect to acknowledge the immediate existence and experiences of AZAPO members in Bloemfontein as a crucial ingredient in shaping the political understanding of the liberation struggle in the Free State.

Seekings' PhD thesis titled, *Quiescence and the Transition to Confrontation: South African Townships, 1978-84*, is a typical work on 'history from below'. Here the author looks attentively at the reasons for the apparent and popular quiescence in most of the SA townships during the period under discussion. According to Seekings, the increase in popular protest was contemporary with less spark of uniformity. He acknowledged that quiescence in the townships since the 1960s, was a result of overt repression, whereby leaders and organisations were suppressed, and police informers promoted a climate of fear and distrust. This, he argued, paralysed any political initiative

³² J. Seekings, 'South African Townships 1980-1991: An annotated bibliography', *Stellenbosch Research Unit for Sociology of Development*, University of Stellenbosch, 1992, p. 50. See also J. Seekings, 'The origins of political mobilization in PWV Townships, 1980-84', in W. Cobbett and R. Cohen (eds.), *Popular struggles in South Africa* (London: Africa World Press, 1988), pp. 59-76; J. Seekings, 'Political mobilisation in Tumahole, 1984-1985', *Africa Perspective: Agrarian struggle in South Africa – The Debate Continue*, 1(7/8), 1989, pp. 105-144; J. Seekings, "Trailing behind the masses": The United Democratic Front and Township politics in the Pretoria-Witwatersrand-Vaal Region, 1983-84", *Journal of Southern African Studies, Special Issue: Social History of Resistance in South Africa*, 18(1), March 1992, pp. 93-114.

in the townships. Township residents found themselves vulnerable to retaliation, thus, their choices of political action needed to be understood in terms of their reluctance to risk involvement in politics.³³

Seekings' book titled, *The UDF: A History of the United Democratic Front in South Africa, 1983-1991*, documented a remarkable account of a coalition of grassroots organizations that made huge contributions to the struggle for democracy in SA. Here Seekings notes the criticisms levelled on the UDF by AZAPO when stating: 'They accused the Charterist movement of perpetuating racial differences through multi-racialism, and of being under committed to the economic empowerment of African people'.³⁴ Leaders from within AZAPO criticized its stance on the struggle against apartheid. He quotes Popo Molefe lamenting about AZAPO being unable to transcend the limits of BC: 'We saw [BC] strategic approach as parochial and hemming the expansion of the anti-apartheid movement ... We had to posit a kind of alternative [to apartheid and racism] capable of uniting the largest section of South Africans committed to a peaceful and just future – an alternative that could lay the foundation for racial reconciliation'.³⁵

Like Seekings, Ineke van Kessel's work on the UDF briefly highlights the activities of AZAPO. This book is based closely on her doctoral thesis, completed at the University of Leiden (Netherlands) in 1995. It provides a valuable account of political protest and organisations in the 1980s. This groundbreaking study focuses on local case-studies, namely, a 'youth-led' revolt in Sekhukhuneland (now Limpopo Province); a civic organization in the West Rand township (now Gauteng Province); and the community newspaper *Grassroots* in Cape Town. This 367 paged book says nothing about other regions, including the Free State. The preliminary chapters of this book tackle a clear and concise overview of national political developments in SA during the 1980s and provides some of the analytical issues arising in the study of these events. She argues: '... it promised to be an interesting case of rural rebellion... Newspapers rarely paid much attention to developments in rural areas'.³⁶ However, it was used in this research as one of the sources to shed light on the roles played by the UDF, ahead of AZAPO.

³³ J. Seekings, 'Quiescence and the Transition to Confrontation: South African Townships, 1978-84', *PhD Thesis* (Oxford: Oxford University, 1990).

³⁴ Seekings, *The UDF: A History of the United Democratic Front in South Africa, 1983-1991*, p. 27.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 33.

³⁶ I. van Kessel, "*Beyond our wildest dreams*": *The United Democratic Front and the transformation of South Africa*, (Charlottesville and London: University Press of Virginia, 2000).

Tshepo Moloi's PhD thesis and his book emanating from the thesis touches on the political activism that happened in one of the Free State Townships of Kroonstad (Maokeng). In both these scholarly works, little reference is made to AZAPO, but something on BCM. Unfortunately, he also does not show the influences that Bloemfontein (Mangaung) had on the political activists of Maokeng or *vice versa*. He dedicates chapter two of his book, *Place of Thorns: Black political protest in Kroonstad since 1976*, to the BCM and student demonstration during 1972 to 1976 but fails to link this with what was happening elsewhere in the Free State. Subsequently, these two scholarly works were preceded by other publications by the same author with no extensive reference to AZAPO.³⁷ This was a continuation by post-apartheid historians to underestimate the role played by AZAPO in many of the Free State Townships, hence, the importance on this study of Mangaung.

In attempts to highlight the role of the political activists in the Free State, in 2017, Chitja Twala hosted colloquiums at the University of the Free State (UFS), Bloemfontein and Qwaqwa campuses, sponsored by the National Institute of Humanities and Social Sciences (NIHSS). Through these colloquiums, a special edition of the Journal for Contemporary History was published in June 2018. From the publication out of 12 articles, eight covered the different themes and topics about the Free State.³⁸ It was commendable that Moloi's article in this special edition entitled, *Zamdela Township: The explosion of confrontational politics, early 1980s to 1990*, is at least addressing the role played by AZAPO and its student movement, AZASM, in galvanizing

³⁷ T. Moloi, 'Black Politics in Kroonstad: Political mobilisation, protest, local government, and general struggles, 1976-1995', *PhD Thesis*, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, 2012. T. Moloi, 'Bodibeng High School: Black Consciousness Philosophy and Students Demonstrations, 1940s – 1976', *South African Historical Journal*, 63(1), 2011, pp. 102-126; T. Moloi, 'The emergence and radicalisation of Black political formations in Kroonstad, 1915-1917', *New Contree: Special Edition*, 67, November 2013, pp. 167-186.; T. Moloi, *Place of Thorns: Black political protest in Kroonstad since 1976* (Johannesburg: Wits University Press, 2015), pp. 44-69.

³⁸ N. Mbatha, 'Narratives of women detained in the Kroonstad Prison during the apartheid era: A socio-political exploration, 1960-1990', *Journal for Contemporary History*, 43(1), June 2018, pp. 91-110; C. Twala, 'Student activism and contestation for political space at the former University of the North (Qwaqwa branch), 1986-1996', *Journal for Contemporary History*, 43(1), June 2018, pp. 137-159; D. Hlalele, 'Higher Education and the liberation struggle in the former Qwaqwa Homeland: A Freirean Approach', *Journal for Contemporary History*, 43(1), June 2018, pp. 178-195; M. Mushonga and T. Seloma, 'Women's voices, women's lives: Qwaqwa women's experiences of the apartheid and post-apartheid eras', *Journal for Contemporary History*, 43(1), June 2018, pp. 196-214; M. Mwaniki, 'Language politics and the struggle for the soul of the University of the Free State (UFS): A microcosm of the socio-political and economic struggles in the Free State Province through time', *Journal for Contemporary History*, 43(1), June 2018, pp. 215-241; S. Matebesi, 'A hungry stomach knows no allegiance': Transactional activism in community protests in Ficksburg', *Journal for Contemporary History*, 43(1), June 2018, pp. 242-261.

the students and youth in this township to challenge the apartheid regime in general and the local authorities in particular.³⁹ Moloi alluded:

Firstly, the establishment of a branch of AZAPO in 1980, and in 1985 of the Congress of South African Students (COSAS), helped to conscientise and mobilise students at Nkgopoleng Secondary School against the local authorities. Secondly, the reforms introduced by the National Party (NP) regime from 1977, through the Community Council Act and in 1982 the Black Local Authorities Act, set the local councilors, already perceived as corrupt puppets of the then regime, on a collision course with the students and young people in the township, and later with the township's adults.⁴⁰

In this article, Moloi dedicates eight of 26 pages to the role of AZAPO in the township. He further noted:

Leading figures within AZAPO in Zamdela took advantage of the crisis brewing in the township to recruit and ferment its position in the township. In August 1980 the Zamdela Community Council hiked rent. The residents boycotted paying rent. On 30 April students at Nkgopoleng Secondary School, in solidarity with their parents, took to the streets. AZAPO, which opposed all the regime's created institutions, joined the demonstration'.⁴¹

The above was testimony to the fact that AZAPO's political activism existed in some towns of the Free State. This aspect is deliberated in the next few chapters of this study. Despite the disjuncture connoted in many of the literature or academic works produced nationally on the history of AZAPO, as indicated previously, the study contends that the organisation's political activities in Bloemfontein have never been the subject for academic scrutiny. The study ranged chronologically and thematically from the emergence of the BC aligned structures in the late 1960s, to the establishment of AZAPO in 1978. This study is positioned alongside several studies that have been a product of scholarly research of the Free State liberation struggle's local histories, albeit not being on AZAPO.⁴²

³⁹ T. Moloi, 'Zamdela Township: The exposition of confrontational politics, early 1980s to 1990', *Journal for Contemporary History*, 43(1), June 2018, pp. 111-136. See also T. Moloi, 'Black student politics in South Africa, 1990-1996', in South African Democracy Education Trust (ed.), *The Road to Democracy in South Africa*, vol. 6, Part 1, (1990-1996), (Pretoria, UNISA Press, 2013).

⁴⁰ Moloi, 'Zamdela Township ...', p. 114.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 127.

⁴² For more information see C. Twala and J. Seekings, 'Activist networks and political protest in the Free State, 1983-1990', in South African Democracy Education Trust (ed.), *The Road to Democracy in South Africa*, vol. 4, Part 1,

Other studies conducted on the liberation struggle of the Free State Province include Phindile Sibongile Kunene's MA dissertation in 2013, which focuses on Phomolong Township in Hennenman. All eight chapters of this dissertation discuss the local politics of the area, but do not address anything about AZAPO and its aligned structures, but explains the pivotal role played by community members around this.⁴³ The above research by Kunene also culminated in the publication of an article, which dealt with protests in this township.⁴⁴ However, Kunene's work is silent on the role of AZAPO. This perpetuates academic stereotypes that only certain organisations or movements in SA were responsible for the country's liberation. This could have been perpetuated by ideological differences and the frictions for political space amongst the ANC, SACP, PAC and AZAPO.

Various scholars on the history of AZAPO failed to go beyond the narrow categorisation of national politics. The different volumes of *The South African Democracy Education (SADET) Project*, culminated in the publication of a few chapters dedicated to AZAPO. This happened despite the massive publications, for example, on the ANC and allied partners. Without really referring to the SADET Project, Emily Bridger observed in her recent publication that the history of the liberation struggle in SA tends to place the ANC at the centre of events and prioritized histories of exile, armed struggles and elites. This approach, she argues, compromised the activities of local activists and protestors within the country.⁴⁵ Bridger was clear in distinguishing the role played by young female political activists, but was also muted on their involvement within the

(1980-1990), (Pretoria: UNISA Press, 2010), pp. 765-813; C. Twala, 'The ANC and the politics of the Free State, 1990-1994', in South African Democracy Education Trust (ed.), *The Road to Democracy in South Africa (1990-1996)*, vol. 6, Part 1, (Pretoria: UNISA Press, 2013), pp. 264-315; C. Twala, 'Survival politics by the Qwaqwa homeland government: Resistance and collaboration', in South African Democracy Education Trust (ed.), *The Road to Democracy in South Africa (1990-1996)*, vol. 6, Part 1, (Pretoria: UNISA Press, 2013), pp. 502-547; C. Twala, '*Ga re ye go nna karolo ya Aforika Borwa*': Thaba Nchu and the challenges of integration into the Free State, 1989-1994', in South African Democracy Education Trust (ed.), *The Road to Democracy in South Africa (1990-1996)*, vol. 4, Part 3, (Austin, Texas: Pan-African University Press, 2019), pp. 1979-2016; C. Twala, 'The Qwaqwa Bantustan and the nuances of political transition and integration into the Free State Province, 1989-1996', in South African Democracy Education Trust (ed.), *The Road to Democracy in South Africa (1990-1996)*, vol. 4, Part 3, (Austin, Texas: Pan-African University Press, 2019), pp. 1957-1977; Moloi, 'Black Politics in Kroonstad: Political mobilisation ...', p. 8; Moloi, *Place of Thorns*; Moloi, 'Bodibeng High School ...', pp. 102-126; Moloi, 'The emergence and radicalization of Black Political Formations in Kroonstad ...', pp. 167-186.

⁴³ For more information see P. Kunene, 'From Apartheid to Democracy: A historical analysis of local struggles in Phomolong Township, Free State: 1985-2005', *MA Dissertation*, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, 2013.

⁴⁴ P. Kunene, 'The Crisis Committee, post-apartheid protest and political mobilisation in Phomolong Township, Free State', *New Contree*, 67, *Special Edition*, November 2013, pp. 98-118.

⁴⁵ E. Bridger, *Young Women Against Apartheid: Gender, Youth and South Africa's Liberation Struggle*, (Woodbridge: James Currey, 2021), p. 6.

AZAPO structures. The above is an indication of the persistence of historical gaps in the historicisation of the liberation struggle. Indeed, few historians have placed AZAPO into proper historical narrative beyond, before and after post-1994. Therefore, there is a need to expand the research so that the history of AZAPO in the region can be documented in the same way as that of other political parties/organisations.

The 2018 Special Edition of the *South African Historical Journal* on the theme: *The politics of armed struggle in Southern Africa*, dedicated attention to the ANC, PAC, Southwest People's Organisation (SWAPO) in Namibia and nothing on BCMA and AZAPO.⁴⁶ From the above analysis, it is clear from the reviewed body of literature that AZAPO's history warrants an in-depth investigation. Based on the above review of literature, the study consequently adds this missing piece to the puzzle, by focusing on AZAPO.

1.5 Aims and objectives of the study

This study aimed to assess the role played by AZAPO in the politics of the Free State in general and Mangaung in particular, prior to the post-apartheid era. It wanted to find out whether the lack of support for AZAPO country-wide was due to, *inter alia*, a lack of above-ground mobilisation strategies, the friction that existed amongst the liberation movements or the intensification of the NP's repression and clampdown activities even though after 1977, the political landscape in SA was transmogrified by BC philosophy. It is thus for this reason that Mangaung will be used as a case in point to explain the above predicament.

In putting this study into proper perspective, the following critical and strategic questions will be conjured or explored during the research process: What role did AZAPO play in the national struggle for liberation in SA? How and who formed the branches of AZAPO in the Free State, and particularly in Mangaung? What mobilisation strategies did AZAPO use to counter the congress-aligned movements and how did the different towns in the province, including Mangaung, respond

⁴⁶ For more information on this see, D.T. McKinley, 'Umkhonto We Sizwe: A critical analysis of the armed struggle of the African National Congress', *South African Historical Journal*, 70(1), March 2018, pp. 27-41; P. Mangashe, 'Operation Zikomo: The armed struggle, the underground and mass mobilization in South Africa's border region, 1986-1990, through the experiences of MK cadres', *South African Historical Journal*, 70(1), March 2018, pp. 42-55; C. Saunders, 'SWAPO, Namibia's Liberation Struggle and the Organisation of African Unity's Liberation Committee', *South African Historical Journal*, 70(1), March 2018, pp. 152-167.

to this? What were the challenges faced by AZAPO activists in Mangaung, which led to some of them opting to escape into exile? What led to the ‘betrayal’ of AZAPO’s ideals by some of its Mangaung activists and how did this impact the survival of the organisation? Why in the early 1990s did AZAPO become a pale moribund organisation or a pale reflection of what BC used to be? This study is of the belief that critical responses to the above questions will conduce to make the research relevant and important in the role played by AZAPO in the national struggle for liberation and particularly in the Free State and in Mangaung. Therefore, the study’s locality enabled the readers to view the liberation struggle from the micro-perspectives of those who were engaged from the grassroots level.

1.6 Research design and methodology

The study provided and focused on thematic, as well as chronological insights into the history of AZAPO, particularly in Mangaung. In doing so and to have a concise understanding of the subject matter, the influence of other AZAPO’s political activities countrywide were also looked at. This study was conducted within the ambit of the qualitative paradigm. The reason for this is that qualitative research is unique in content, focus and form. It is a holistic process that explicitly integrates ontology and epistemology, theory and method, in order to develop unique approaches to the study of the social world.⁴⁷ With the holistic process, the primary consideration is the research nexus and how the theoretical and epistemological issues will bear on the research process and how deeply this impacts the knowledge-building process, including the selection and use of appropriate research tools or methods.⁴⁸ In designing research as a holistic process, the researcher gained access to a number of factors, which had an impact on AZAPO for knowledge creation.

As mentioned before, due to the lack of written sources on AZAPO at the Free State provincial level, the study partially relied on oral sources, which forms part of history-from-below. The study used life-history interviews with a select group of individuals who played an important role in the history of AZAPO, both nationally and regionally. The interviewees provided to a certain extent, descriptions of events and processes and opinions of key issues, events and processes, using their own analytical lenses. In doing so and in a scholarly way, this study elevated their stories as

⁴⁷ S.N. Hesse-Biber and P. Leavy, *The practice of qualitative research*, (Boston: SAGE, 2010), p. 375.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

contributors, and some unknown actors in the struggle for liberation. In this study, interviewees were chosen for inclusion, based on their recollection of key historical events pertaining to AZAPO's history, as well as of unique and/or significant experiences, and their reflections on key political issues, incidents and processes.

The researcher identified ways in which the interviews would fill gaps or provide more insight into some controversial issues in the literature on the liberation struggle, with reference to AZAPO. For example, there were speculations about the banning of AZAPO and how it was envisaged to function outside the country, as well as the mandate which was difficult to fulfill under the challenges that the organisation was faced with during that period in its history. This was also compromised by the lack of studies conducted on the exile existence of AZAPO. Thus, filling this hiatus, as well as human experience in the political trajectory of SA's activists of AZAPO, are critical. Their lived experiences as office-bearers, activists, and members of the armed forces, are pertinent to provide this study with their appreciation of national features of the struggle for liberation in SA.

In interrogating the silences about AZAPO, the researcher contended in this study that archival documents, irrespective of their physical states and locations, as created by actors operating within diverse physical, epistemological, and cognitive milieus, were important. With the above, the history of AZAPO was therefore narrated and analysed by consulting different historical sources. In this sense, the documents exist in relation to others within official and unofficial channels and archival repositories. Primary sources consulted, included archival materials from the Free State Provincial Archives in Bloemfontein; the Archives for Contemporary Affairs at the University of the Free State in Bloemfontein; the National Archives in Pretoria; the Liberation Archives at the National Heritage and Cultural Studies Centre (NAHECS) at the University of Fort Hare in (Alice); and the William Cullen Historical Papers at the University of the Witwatersrand (WITS University) in Johannesburg. One tends to agree with Ann Stoler, who calls the above 'nuggets of hidden information' whereby the study takes the 'unwritten' into consideration.⁴⁹

Online collections, such as the Digital Innovation South Africa (DISA) were also consulted. Other primary sources that were scrutinised were the minutes of the AZAPO meetings nationally and at

⁴⁹ A. Stoler, *Along the Archival Grain: Epistemic Anxieties and Colonial Common Sense*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009), p. 3.

the local level. Secondary sources included newspaper articles, books, and chapters in books, theses, dissertations, journal articles and conference papers. The primary and secondary sources alike demonstrate that during the 1970s and 1980s, AZAPO members' lives were shaped by escalating political conflict and violence, due to State repression and disagreements with other political movements.

The study used life-history interviews with a select group of individuals, who played an important role in the history of AZAPO, both nationally and regionally. The interviewees provided, to a certain extent, descriptions of events and processes and opinions of key issues, events and processes, using their own analytical lenses. In doing so and in a scholarly way, this study elevated their stories as contributors and some unknown actors, in the struggle for liberation. In this study, interviewees were chosen for inclusion, based on their recollection of key historical events, pertaining to AZAPO's history, as well as for their unique and/or significant experiences, and their reflections on key political issues, incidents and processes. The researcher identified ways in which the interviews would fill gaps or provide more insight into some controversial issues in the literature on the liberation struggle, with reference to AZAPO. For example, there were speculations about the banning of AZAPO and how it was envisaged to function outside the country, as well as the mandate which was difficult to fulfill under the challenges that the organisation was faced with during that period in its history. This was also compromised by the lack of studies conducted on the exile existence of AZAPO.

1.7 Value of the study

This study contributes another important element to the literature of the liberation history and the anti-apartheid struggle in SA. It tells the story of the AZAPO political activists as they operated at the local level, hence, using Mangaung as a case in point. This exhibits what one would refer to as 'history from below'; because the political aspects and activism, as highlighted in this study, to a greater extent, showcase and acknowledge the role played by relatively 'unknown and uncelebrated' liberation stalwarts in the Free State and Mangaung in particular.

The study raises the voices of often-forgotten liberation heroes in the Free State and offers fresh insights into the lived experiences of such political activists. As mentioned before, the study addresses the topic that scholars of history have neglected for years, prior and in the post-apartheid

era. It accounts for many AZAPO activists nationally and locally, whose stories and experiences need to be reflected into a mainstream historical narrative of the country's liberation struggle. In this study, the researcher contends that the 'neglect' of AZAPO's history cannot be left unchallenged in attempts to balance and streamline the analysis of the liberation struggle in SA.

One tends to agree with Saunders in his article, when stating the country's liberation struggle is mythologized. Mentioning the history of the ANC as a typical example, it has entrenched narratives of its predominance and continues to draw strength from its historical role in the struggle. This, he argued, is done at the expense of other organisations.⁵⁰ Seekings writes that although there are academics, politicians and other general populations, showing interest in the country's past, large gaps remain. Early works produced by social historians within the country during the 1980s and early 1990s, did much to uncover resistance 'from below' engaged in and organised by people within the townships, but little has been done to advance this scholarship.⁵¹ Tapping from the above observation by Seekings, it becomes prudent to pursue an academic investigation of AZAPO in Mangaung, an attempt envisaged to contribute to the struggle for liberation.

1.8 Ethical considerations

Ethics can be defined as the general responsibility of researchers to be truthful and respectful to all individual participants and acknowledging all used data in a professional way. In adherence to the above, this study conformed to moral, ethical, and academic standards of an inquiry in the humanities. Against this background, the study avoided bias and subscribed to respect for confidentiality. Ethical clearance for this study was sought out from the University of the Free State Ethical Clearance Committee and duly granted.

⁵⁰ C. Saunders, 'Liberation Struggles in Southern Africa: New Perspectives', *South African Historical Journal*, 62(1), 2010, p. 5.

⁵¹ J. Seekings, 'Quiescence and the transition to confrontation: South African Townships, 1978-1984', *PhD Thesis*, University of Oxford, 1990). See also J. Seekings, "Whose Voices? Politics and Methodology in the Study of Political Organisation and Protest in the Final Phase of the 'Struggle' in South Africa", *South African Historical Journal*, 62(1), 2010, p. 13.

1.9 Delimitations of the study

Although analysing the history of AZAPO requires a long time and engaging various stakeholders in and outside the Free State Province, however, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the study might shortfall in capturing relevant sentiments and viewpoints of stakeholders. The researcher is aware of this limitation but tried to augment this through the usage of archival material. Another noticeable challenge was the reluctance of potential interviewees to disclose what could be deemed reliable and authentic information to critically confirm and substantiate the line of arguments pursued in this study.

1.10 Chapter layout

The arguments reflected in this study are systematically addressed over four substantive chapters, excluding this introductory section and the concluding chapter. The study's thematic concerns are discussed chronologically, but with occasional flashbacks in some chapters and sections to emphasise and reinforce themes or points. This section provides a synopsis on the outline of the chapters for this study.

Chapter One:

This chapter provides a brief overview and a historical background and rationale for undertaking the research. It shows that despite the marginalisation and 'neglect' of AZAPO's history in liberation historiography, the organisation warrants such a study to be undertaken. It asks what factors led to this marginalisation and 'neglect'. It underpins and highlights the research problem and objectives, research design and research methodology, the value of the study, its preview, as well as its limitations. The researcher is conscious of not taking urban histories of the liberation struggle, such as the one on AZAPO, and for only tackling the township struggles vaguely as 'sites of the struggle' without specifically attaching meaning of other organisations and profiling their role in the liberation struggle. Simultaneously, it highlights and demonstrates why AZAPO history has been relegated to the periphery.

Chapter Two:

This chapter provides brief information for the formation of BCM in SA, which subsequently led to the establishment of AZAPO. It charts the initial encounters of the national leaders of AZAPO

in establishing it and how the country's political climate was during this period. Engaging with the formation of AZAPO, these leaders set up a new purpose and trajectory for the politicisation of the masses along other political lines and ideology. This assignment provided them with potent feelings of political expediency, but they began to agitate for an alternative political movement to mitigate the black peoples' experiences of inferiority and vulnerability in the eyes of the NP's regime.

Chapter Three:

The chapter first explains how AZAPO instigated a social, cultural, and political awakening in the country. Second, the chapter ensconces into the ideological underpinnings, which defines AZAPO and explicitly shows that AZAPO was designed to defy state repression. While it sought to address various aspects of the Black experience, it soon adhered to a more socialist interpretation and approach, even emphasizing workers' concerns.

Chapter Four:

This chapter is one of the core backbones of the study, as it provides a historical overview and background understanding, of AZAPO in the Free State. First, it deals with the role of students, youth, and individuals in the formation of AZAPO branches in the Free State with emphasis on Mangaung. Second, it also investigates how the political activists by AZAPO members in Mangaung led to the pursuit of the broader SA's liberation. The contest for political space with other organisations in Mangaung, is explained.

Chapter Five:

The chapter also uses life-history interviews to explain the above. This chapter elevates another important issue into the political discourse of AZAPO, namely, the innate or inherent weaknesses of the movement in Mangaung. The repression from the apartheid regime, due to incarceration, led to frustration of members and leaders of the organisation. Another challenge was the recruitment of its members and leadership into the congress-aligned organisations.

Chapter Six:

This is the final chapter of the study. This chapter provides for the critical conclusion of the study. The findings of the study are highlighted. It shows and demonstrates how holistically the thesis examined AZAPO's political thought in Mangaung and themes around it. It gives a possible political trajectory that AZAPO needs to embark upon in the present new political dispensation. Furthermore, the chapter ponders on future research on AZAPO regarding its ideological re-orientation; the relevancy of its 'socialist' outlook, membership policy, etc.

1.11 Conclusion

The study attempted to reflect on the role of AZAPO in Mangaung through the liberation historiography of SA. It added academic debates and dispelled the one-sided narrative of the ANC being the master liberation movement in SA. It sought to locate the position of AZAPO and in its leaders within the framework of being one of the significant liberation organisation embedded within the principles of the BCM. It showed that the banning of the BCM did not signify the end of black consciousness' ideological underpinnings to its adherence. To achieve the above, the historiographical analysis was provided with elucidation on methods to be undertaken.

CHAPTER TWO : THE AZANIAN PEOPLE’S ORGANISATION (AZAPO): AN HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter intends to unpack the formation and origin of AZAPO and the circumstances which led to this. Explaining and contextualizing this, one of the many pamphlets of the organisation, found at the archives stated the following: ‘AZAPO is a movement representing all the oppressed and exploited people in their struggle for national, social, and economic liberation. It believes that only through the unity of the oppressed and exploited as one people (so-called ‘Africans, Coloureds, and Indians’) will we achieve our goal of total liberation from all forms of oppression and exploitation’.⁵² With the above as background to the formation of AZAPO, the chapter deeply examines the historical context for its formation from the mid-1970s. First, it outlines the organisation’s ideological underpinnings, and it reinforces its existence within the SA’s political strata. Second, the chapter shows how AZAPO simultaneously reduced resistance for its political dominance in a space that was dominated by the congress-aligned groups. Third, asserting its political dominance, while other movements were banned, AZAPO aggrandizes itself at the expense of the rest.

The chapter further explores epistemological questions on political repression in Mangaung, which almost compromised the formation of the organisation’s structure in the area. Therefore, it is argued in this chapter that no readily available foundation existed on which the founders in Mangaung could build their first branch. The chapter therefore looks at other political contexts to illustrate how these leaders gradually put in place a base for the formation of the AZAPO branch that later equipped them to become undisputed role players in local politics. The chapter sets the stage for the subsequent chapters of this study which, together, help to make sense of the political shroud, which blanketed AZAPO’s politics from 1978 to 1994.

⁵² Historical Papers, William Cullen Library, University of the Witwatersrand (henceforth Wits), *AZAPO: Pamphlet: Viva AZAPO*, File, A2618-Cg1-1-01, p. 1.

2.2 The formation of AZAPO: A national perspective

When the BC organisations, along with the most important leaders were banned in October 1977, the discussion on the formation of AZAPO in 1978 created a platform for the re-institution of BC ideals on the ground. Amongst those banned were SASO, BPC, SASM, the Black Parents' Association (BPA), the Black Women's Federation, the Union of Black Journalists, and the Medupe Writers' Association. Amid detention and intimidation, AZAPO's inaugural conference was held in September 1979. The Black communities responded to the banning by forming several organisations in attempts to replace those that had been banned. Beginning in 1979, several civic associations were formed in response to local struggles over a wide range of grievances.⁵³ Such included the Soweto Urban Bantu Council (SUBC); the Port Elizabeth Black Civic Organisation (PEBCO); the Uitenhage Black Civic Organisation (UBCO); etc. Towards the end of the decade, several student organisations were established as well. For example, the Congress of South African Students (COSAS) was launched in May 1979 in Roodepoort. With the above information, it was therefore clear that the formation of AZAPO was rooted within the traditions of BC, as crystalized in the late 1970s. Hence, in this section of the chapter, when dealing with the formation of AZAPO and to provide context, constant reference is made to the BCM, SASO and other related BC movements.

Hennie Kotze and Anneke Greyling wrote the following about the establishment of AZAPO and the immediate challenges after its establishment:

The Azanian People's Organisation was established in May 1978 to fill the vacuum left by the banning of numerous Black Consciousness movements in October 1977. Following its establishment AZAPO could not immediately get off the ground. Most of the organisation's leaders were arrested shortly after the launch and even before a constitutional or launch conference could be held... On 30 September 1979 AZAPO was established for a second time at a conference in Roodepoort, Transvaal. Curtis Nkondo, chairman of the Soweto Teachers' Action Committee, was elected president and George Wauchope, former leader of the Black People's Convention, became the publicity secretary.⁵⁴

⁵³ G. Houston, 'The United Democratic Front: A Case Study of Democratic Organisation, 1983-1987', *PhD Dissertation*, University of Natal, Durban, 1998, pp. 330-331.

⁵⁴ H. Kotze and A. Greyling, *Political Organisations in South Africa, A-Z* (Tafelberg: Cape Town, 1991), p. 64.

Kotze and Greyling contend that reference to Azania contained in AZAPO's name is derived from the PAC's manifesto drawn up in 1959. Thus, in 1965, while banned, the PAC adopted the name 'Azania' for SA.⁵⁵ According to Robert Fatton, the BCM contributed extensively to a surge of moral anger from the Black masses and its radicalisation became an indispensable spur to their revolutionary ideals and later activities. In justification of the above, he noted that the development of BC as a counter-consciousness, channeled the unified opposition of Black population to the White domination. This became a fundamental and necessary ingredient in the process of challenging White supremacy.⁵⁶

Expressing the BC's approach towards White supremacy, Fatton postulated: 'White capitalism made a major contribution to the formation of apartheid, there is no unilateral connection between the two. That exploitation and domination assumed a racist dimension cannot simply be explained in terms of capitalist exigencies. Rather, race as a means of mobilisation in the defense of privilege and supremacy, provided the White masses with something real and incomparably superior to a still nascent and conflict-ridden class consciousness. While racism is not just a 'false consciousness', however deplorable, it held the immediate promise of material prosperity and cultural superiority'.⁵⁷ In summary, SASO articulated the necessity of an intellectual and psychological liberation. To them, Black had reached a stage of crisis by discovering a series of existential anomalies, which deviated from the expectations generated by white liberal discourse. The existential anomalies had reached massive and egregious proportions that blacks were to abandon liberalism altogether. These anomalies became the building blocks for the formation of AZAPO in the late 1970s.

In this chapter, the researcher explains that to understand the origins of AZAPO, it is equally important to comprehend the role of SASO and the BC in perpetuating the question of being 'Black', which at the later stages became the guiding tool of AZAPO leaders. The researcher is wary of the fact that this kind of history has been extensively documented, but here a link is made with the establishment of AZAPO. To articulate this link, it is also prudent to understand how BC and AZAPO embraced the term 'Black' and rejected the 'Non-White' one. An editorial in the

⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 66.

⁵⁶ R. Fatton, *Black Consciousness in South Africa: The dialectics of ideological resistance to White supremacy* (Albany: State University of New York, 1986), p. 40.

⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 44.

SASO Newsletter, *Who is Black*, published in September 1970, unpacks the rationale behind the concept 'Black'.

To SASO leadership, the concept 'Black' had to be viewed in context. This simply meant Black people had to refuse being seen as non-persons by the Whites as the apartheid regime projected. Black people, according to AZAPO had to adopt a collective and yet positive outlook on the question of being Black and not see that with the lens of the others. AZAPO leaders argued that the struggle for recognition was targeted to the common enemy, namely, the apartheid regime, and the White majority who supported it. The leadership was also cognizant of the country's entrenched racial divisions that could possibly challenge Black people to function as a cohesive unit and front. They believed that if this was difficult for Black unity to prevail, at least the different units should be working in the same direction and complementing each other and under the AZAPO's principles. In further giving direction to the above, the Newsletter stated: 'By all means be proud of your Indian heritage or your African culture but make sure that when you're looking around for somebody to kick at, choose the fellow who is sitting on your neck. He may not be as easily accessible as your Black brother, but he is the source of your discomfort'.⁵⁸

Placed in context, therefore, the 'Black Consciousness' attitude seeks to define one's 'enemy' more clearly and to broaden the base from which Black people were operating. This was a deliberate attempt to counteract the 'divide and rule' attitude of the apartheid regime.⁵⁹ One of the founding members of the BCM, Barney Pityana⁶⁰ wrote: 'A critical image of the White-orientated values and standards will help us discover that the history of the past has been veiled in a shroud of mystery. A radical re-formulation of history must be undertaken... Only with such a state of mind will the Blacks be able to neutralize White domination and propaganda'.⁶¹ Pityana subsequently described BC as a parallel movement to the well-established liberation movements,

⁵⁸ SASO Newsletter, *Who is Black*, September 1970, p. 3.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

⁶⁰ Barney Pityana was a key figure in the politics of Black Consciousness Movement (BCM) and Biko's companion. Pityana was born in Uitenhage, and he attended UFH and could not finish and in 1976 graduated with a Law Degree from University of South Africa (UNISA). He is among the founding members of SASO, which includes Biko, Harry Nengwekhulu, Vuyelwa Mashalaba and others. He was also a member of CYL. Due to his banning by government, he went into exile in 1978, where he founded the Black Consciousness Movement of Azania (BCMA). He however, enrolled at Oxford King's College, studying theology and later served as an Anglican curate. Furthermore, he served as the director of the Programme to Combat Racism at the World Council of Churches. After apartheid, he enrolled at UCT where he received his PhD. He has served as UNISA Vice-Chancellor and other government works. He is now a fulltime Reverend at Anglican Church of Southern Africa.

⁶¹ SASO Newsletter, *The Politics of Powerlessness*, September 1970, p. 9.

a 'meta-narrative of liberation that was unifying rather than particularizing'. With the above, it was clear that he saw no conflict between his personal membership in the BC and the ANC.

The same argument as the one above, which later also appealed to the leadership of AZAPO, was published in another edition of the SASO Newsletter in 1972 and states: '... an attitude of mind, a way of life whose basic tenet is that the Black must reject all value systems that seek to make him a foreigner in the country of his birth and reduce his basic human dignity'.⁶² The BC activists expand the definition of BC philosophy, not only of struggle, but also of the politics of being Black in an anti-black apartheid world. The consequences of a questioned and denied humanness - of being treated as sub-humans, sub-persons, or animals - invariably lead to the profound experience of existential dread and anguish in the face of non-being.⁶³ Being cannot be non-being and therefore Black cannot be 'non-White'. Blackness is the beingness that characterised oppressed people in SA. Hence, those who are politically, socially, and economically oppressed in apartheid SA will inevitably be Black, Coloured and Indians.⁶⁴

In taking this argument further, AZAPO's publication notes that the 'Non-White' concept denotes categorisation of people based on racial connotations. The concept implies that all Black people must accept or adopt that White way of life to be acceptable as human.⁶⁵ Based on its founding principles, AZAPO disputed the superiority of Whites and indicated that 'non-White' refers to government stooges, informers, and reactionary middle-class elements, who identify with and sell their souls to the White, racist, and capitalist class. In this publication, AZAPO pledged: 'AZAPO rejects racism, it is anti-racist. In a liberated Azania there shall be no reference to people either as 'Africans', 'Coloureds', 'Whites', 'Indians', or 'four national groups'. All citizens will be free from all forms of prejudice, racism, exploitation, and oppression'.⁶⁶

With the above said, the researcher analysed the establishment and future evolution of AZAPO, as embedded within Scientific Socialism and Dialectical Materialism. The dialectical method is a method of scientific investigation and understanding, based in the appreciation of universal

⁶² SASO Newsletter, *Policy Manifesto of SASO*, 1972, p. 3.

⁶³ M.P. More, *Biko: Philosophy, identity, and liberation*, (Cape Town: HSRC, 2017), p.142.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p.141.

⁶⁵ Historical Papers, Wits, *AZAPO: Pamphlet: Viva AZAPO*, File, A2618-Cg1-1-01, p. 1.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

features of the real material world.⁶⁷ This theory stated that political and historical events result from the conflict of forces and are interpretable as a series of contradictions, whilst at the same time offering solutions. Thus, the conflict is seen as caused by material needs of the people. The material conditions, which existed during the apartheid era, determined the attitude of minds of the BC members and politically influenced those of AZAPO.

According to David Hirschmann, the organisation's introduction of class analysis marked a departure from the race-based analysis of BCM. Furthermore, it proposed a socialist future and placed immense emphasis on anti-capitalism and anti-imperialism.⁶⁸ As argued by Steven McDonald, during its formative years, AZAPO kept a low profile, except for the national attention it received when it worked with Father Patrick Matelengwe and family members in the planning for the funeral arrangements of Robert Sobukwe in 1978.⁶⁹ Providing context to the formation of AZAPO and the country's political climate at the time, Janet Smith notes the following: 'AZAPO emerged out of a time of political chaos. Of the struggle years until then, 1976 and 1977 were the most desperate and the bloodiest, as the regime shamelessly turned its guns on children in school uniform. The government was sanctioning the assassinations of its enemies with gunshots in the back and by parcel bombs... But the activists who vowed they would never submit, even under horrifying torture, knew it was unlikely their most valiant actions would yet shut down the violent racists who ruled'.⁷⁰

AZAPO is the political home of the BCM and the heir to the organisations that were banned by the apartheid regime in 1977. BC is more a philosophy than an ideology. It grew intellectually from the same roots as Pan-Africanism, Negritude, Black Pride and Black Power.⁷¹ A standard

⁶⁷ M. Cornforth, *Science versus Idealism: In Defence of Philosophy against Positivism and Pragmatism*, (London: Lawrence and Wishart Ltd, 1955), p. 231. See also N. Gibson, 'Black Consciousness 1977-1987: The dialectics of liberation in South Africa', *Africa Today*, 35(1), 1988, pp. 5-26.

⁶⁸ D. Hirschmann, 'The Black Consciousness Movement in South Africa', *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 28(1), March 1990, pp. 1-22. See also S. Moodley, 'AZAPO', *Agenda, Special Issue: Emancipation and Liberation*, 7(10), 1991, p. 35; Gibson, 'Black Consciousness 1977-1987 ...', p. 5-21.

⁶⁹ S. McDonald, 'A Guide to Black Politics in South Africa', *CSIS Africa Notes*, 36, 5 November 1984, p. 3. See also Historical Papers, William Cullen Library, Wits, Robert Sobukwe Papers, *B. Pogrand, Research note: Cecil Ntloko (original, handwritten, (undated manuscript)*, File A2618-C150. For more information on Sobukwe's political life see B. Pogrand, *Sobukwe and Apartheid* (Jonathan Ball Publishers, Johannesburg, 1990).

⁷⁰ J. Smith, 'The fight against the black comprador bourgeoisie: The story of AZAPO', in B. Ndaba, T. Owen, M. Panyane, R. Serumula and J. Smith, *The Black Consciousness Reader* (Sunnyside: Jacana Media (Pty) Ltd, 2017), pp. 178-179.

⁷¹ McDonald, p. 3. South Africa and America have a shared history of racial oppression and discrimination. The Black Consciousness Movement in South Africa to some extent mirrored the Civil Rights Movement in America, both

criticism of BC is that it was an ‘American import’. It was viewed with some suspicion by the ANC leaders incarcerated on Robben Island. They believed that the ideology advocated by the BCM was imported from the US and adopted without checking the different ‘concrete’ situations of the two countries. The ANC argued that the BCM disregarded the role played by the progressive Whites, including liberals, missionaries, professionals and businessmen, who formed part of the liberation movement. Thus, the ideology of BCM was viewed as remaining ‘embryonic’ and ‘clannish’.⁷²

According to Mabogo More, the admiration of both ancient and modern literature should be given to BC's popular political bravery movement. As a result, the philosophical impacts, and effects this had on many of the oppressed South Africans may be followed and traced via BC literature. Settler-colonialism established boundaries and dictated what the African people could and could not do, fostering a culture of unwavering paternalism. This was challenged by the formation of the BCM grassroots BC programmes into communities. It operated as the positive response in the struggle for the Black African authentic existence.⁷³

Gibson asserts that the BC was a new philosophic point of departure for the liberation movements in the late 1960s, although its philosophic development remained in a very preliminary stage at the time.⁷⁴ Furthermore, this point is advanced by Itumeleng Mosala and Buti Tlhagale, when they argue that it ‘remains to be seen, whether it was a shift at the level of principles (ideology) or merely strategy and tactics’.⁷⁵ In his analysis of the BC, Ian M. Macqueen argues that the movement was a new discourse that rested on a more sophisticated political analysis of South African society. It sought to challenge both the physical system of White racism and the

fighting for equality and liberation. Both movements aimed to empower Black people and challenge systemic racism, emphasize the importance of self-love and self-acceptance and advocate for Black pride and identity. They both sought to dismantle White supremacy and colonialism by calling for an end to segregation and discrimination.

⁷² I.M. Macqueen, *Black Consciousness and Progressive Movements under Apartheid*, (Pietermaritzburg: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press, 2018), p. 5.

⁷³ M.P. More, ‘Biko: Africana Existentialist Philosopher’, *Alternation*, 11(1), 2004, pp. 79-108.

⁷⁴ N. Gibson, ‘Black Consciousness 1977-1987...’, p. 6. It should be noted that the Black Consciousness Movement (BCM) organizations often spent their time under strong government censorship of media, publications and banning orders. This influenced the loss of synthetically notions of Black Consciousness (BC) philosophy, especially in the post-Biko era. Henceforth, some of its critics and proponents after Biko began to argue that BC was a spent force, merely an expression of ‘cultural revolution’ in the minds of the subordinates ... ‘self-love, identity and cultural assertion’. See also H. Adam, ‘The rise of Black Consciousness in South Africa’, *Race*, 15(2), 1973, pp. 155-157.

⁷⁵ I. Mosala and B. Tlhagale, *The Unquestionable Right to be Free: Black Theology from South Africa* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1986), p. 13.

psychological dimensions of a crippling inferiority complex among Black people, because of the apartheid system.⁷⁶

As mentioned in chapter one of this study, one cannot understand the establishment of AZAPO without tracing its roots from SASO and the BC. According to Ranwedzi Harry Nengwekhulu, a founder member of SASO, together with Steve Biko, Barney Pityana and Hendrick Musi, the formation of this student organisation was influenced by other political developments happening elsewhere in the world. In his interview with Baldwin Ndaba, Nengwekhulu states it was around 1968 when the whole world seemed to experience popular rebellion, what he referred to as 'outright revolution'. He cited the case in the US, whereby the civil right movements brought the Black Panther to the fore, while the Americans were protesting in growing numbers against the Vietnam War. Another case of an open rebellion he cited, was also in 1968 when socialism engulfed Europe, particularly France. Here students and workers threatened the government with massive protests. He explained that at the same time, there were often deadly students' protests in Sweden, Brazil, Spain, Mexico, Poland, Italy and Yugoslavia. During the same year by October 1968, riots unfolded in Kingston, Jamaica, inspired by the fury of students and others when their government banned Black Power leader and Guyanese historian, Walter Rodney, from returning to teach at the University of the West Indies'.⁷⁷

The developments mentioned above contributed to the politicisation of students in SA. When SASO was formed⁷⁸, Nengwekhulu recalls that the then *Rand Daily Mail* editor, Allister Sparks refused to refer to them as 'Blacks'. According to Sparks, the word 'Black' was emotive and indicated to him and Stan Ntwasa that he (Sparks) was trying to find a name for them. When Sparks proposed the name 'Afrocolosians' (meaning Africans, Coloureds and Indians), they were offended. Nengwekhulu recalls: 'I remember telling Allister Sparks, you will call us Blacks at gunpoint'.⁷⁹ With the formation of SASO in July 1969, the organisation had its inaugural conference at Turfloop, and Biko was elected the first president. These developments happened

⁷⁶ Macqueen, *Black Consciousness and Progressive Movements under Apartheid*, p. 14.

⁷⁷ B. Ndaba and J. Smith, 'Steve Biko and the rise of Black Consciousness', in B. Ndaba, et al., pp. 24-25.

⁷⁸ The inaugural conference of SASO took place at Turfloop in July 1969. Steve Biko was elected its first president. His deputy was the previous SRC President at Turfloop, Petrus Machaka. Other leaders included Barney Pityana; Lindiwe Mabandla; Jeff Baqwa; Ben Langa; Harry Nengwekhulu; Hendrick Musi; Manana Kgware; Aubrey Mokoape; Keith Mokoape; and Vuyelwa Mashalaba.

⁷⁹ Ndaba and Smith, pp. 28-29.

against the backdrop of the founding of the University Christian Movement (UCM).⁸⁰ Ideologies emanating out of Black theology and the work of Brazilian education theorist, Paul Freire, were used to invigorate a sense of Black power to SASO's followers.⁸¹

Biko and Pityana rallied support under the slogan 'Black Man, you are on Your Own'.⁸² This slogan was an appeal to Black communities to band together against the apartheid regime. Biko's thought was centered on the reaffirmation of the humanity of the oppressed people, as they needed to realise that their liberation is anchored in their own praxis. In other words, the attainment of freedom is reliant on them attaining critical consciousness as invoked by the philosophy of BC and, as such, affirming one's essence of blackness is imperative. It was interesting to note that the founders of SASO also came through missionary schools and were active young Christians. At high school they were members of Christian societies and at university, they were active members

⁸⁰ The University Christian Movement (UCM) played a significant role in the formation of SASO. It created space to African students to indulge in their politico-intelligentsia and helped with both resources and material development. Ultimately this became a fertile ground for thoughts and developing a 'non-white students' body. The UCM was formally launched in July 1967 during a congress held in Grahamstown with about 90 clergymen and students in attendance. In this congress, Basil Moore was elected president with ten other executive members. The executive members included Colin Collins, Winifred Kgwane, and several African, Coloured and Indian members. The movement grew rapidly, setting up 30 branches at seminars, universities, and teacher-training colleges. By July 1968, at the second congress was held at Stutterheim, where 60 percent of the delegates were black. The UCM from its inception, was a Christian student movement with tendencies of radicalism and gave Black students a voice in a space dominated by NUSAS and its liberal tendencies. One of the many factors, which led to its establishment was the speech delivered by the NUSAS president, Jonty Driver, whereby he questioned the role of NUSAS and the failure to transform and have a Black leader. Although as the leader he advocated for the above, he was wary of the situation where his leadership could be weakened and perhaps lead to the break-away of Black members from NUSAS. It was also worth noting that the formation of the UCM was influenced by the deliberations of the Second Vatican Council, held from 1962 to 1965, which sought to align the Christian world with modernity. Following the first congress, the UCM organized multi-racial holiday camps, encouraging students to live together and express their critique of apartheid. The leaders of UCM had links with overseas-based organisations, including the US-based body also called the University Christian Movement (UCM) and funded their SA counterparts. For more information on UCM, see P. Walshe, *Church versus State in South Africa: The case of the Christian Institute*, (London: C. Hurst and Company: Orbis Books, 1983), p. 149; P. Walshe, 'Church versus State in South Africa: The Christian Institute and the resurgence of African Nationalism', *Journal of Church and State*, 19(3), October 1977, pp. 457-479; T. Bell and D.B. Ntsebeza, *Unfinished business: South Africa, Apartheid and Truth*, (Cape Town, Verso, 2001), p. 123; R. Fatton, *Black Consciousness in South Africa: The dialects of ideological resistance to White Supremacy* (New York, State University of New York Press, 1986), p. 65; C.R.D. Halisi, *Black political thought in the making of South African Democracy*, (Indiana, 1999), p. 7; W.J. Houston, 'A critical evaluation of the University Christian Movement as an ecumenical mission to students, 1967-1972', *M. Theology*, University of South Africa, Pretoria, 1997, pp. 18-22; B. Moore, 'A 1970 Theological point of view of the UCM', Historical Papers, William Cullen Library, Wits, File HPRA AD1126/A, p. 1; V. Mafungo, 'Black Theology: A re-assessment of Christ' SASO Newsletter, 1(4), September 1972, p. 7.

⁸¹ Ndaba and Smith, p. 59.

⁸² *Ibid.*, p. 61.

the UCM. Biko, the first President of SASO was an Anglican and Pityana, the first Secretary-General of SASO was an active Anglican as well.⁸³

SASO's political vibrancy was felt at the University of the North at Turfloop, due to student resistance against the apartheid state. As explained by Anne Heffernan, these activists also served an important role in representing Turfloop, and the radical politics that had developed on campus, to the rest of SA.⁸⁴ In an interview conducted with Nengwekhulu by Heffernan, he explained that the debates ensued on whether their organisation should operate above ground or underground. According to the founders of the organisation, they were skeptical that operating above ground could lead to it being banned within weeks. Equally, starting underground could also hamper their ability to mobilise students.

As quoted by Heffernan, he stated: 'In order to maximise their influence and mobilisation in those first years, SASO devised strategies to prolong their existence and influence. One of these strategies was the layering of leadership, pairing each member of the executive with one or more deputies who could step into the key role quickly if a prominent leader was banned'.⁸⁵ Thus, leaders such as Abraham Onkgopotse Tiro were to play that role, should the likes of Nengwekhulu be banned or arrested. This would keep SASO's aspirations alive. Tiro had already started travelling within and even outside the country to popularise SASO. In 1973 he made a speech in Lesotho where he reiterated SASO's position against White liberalism. He stated: 'We have no use for liberals. We reject their help. They have no part to play in the struggle for liberation. Their policy for multi-racialism is useless'.⁸⁶

The strategy employed by the BCM to achieve the goal of a non-racial and egalitarian society was that of Black solidarity. The leaders anticipated that this would enable Black people to eventually bargain with White people from a position of strength and equality, rather than from a position of inferiority and weakness. This was aptly summarized by Goba: "The Black Consciousness ideology is thus 'not just a therapy to make us feel good about our blackness ... it constitutes a

⁸³ A. M-Africa, *SASO: Newsletter. 50th Anniversary Edition, 1970-1973*, 1(1), 2019, p. 6.

⁸⁴ A. Heffernan, *Limpopo's Legacy: Student politics and democracy in South Africa*, (Johannesburg: Wits University Press, 2019), p. 67.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 69.

⁸⁶ *The Star*, 'Tiro's goal was black liberation', 4 February 1974. See also Historical Papers, William Cullen Library, Wits, *South African Institute of Race Relations*, File, AD1912/239.

serious political programme of action”.⁸⁷ On the basis of the above, it was clear that Goba intended to produce a tentative definition of BC as a political philosophy whose goal was to forge and promote the struggle for Black liberation in a world of White domination.

Furthermore, on SASO, Heffernan discussed the exclusive and explosive nature and strategies by the organisation to prevent banning and prolong its existence. Consequently, it had to embark on a crusade to promote thorough and deep-reaching indoctrination in its ranks. She acknowledges that, ‘SASO itself was unable to maintain high levels of ideological cohesion and organisational effectiveness once it moved beyond the bounds of educational institutions, though its activities were also engaged in reaching outside SASO’s ranks to spread the message of Black consciousness’.⁸⁸

Emphasizing the above and referring to AZAPO, Mosibudi Mangena⁸⁹ (erstwhile President of AZAPO) maintained that BC was in essence the realisation by the ‘Black man of the need to rally together with his brothers around the cause of their oppression’ and to operate as a group to rid themselves of the shackles that bind them to perpetual servitude. Explaining further, it sought to infuse the Black community with a new-found pride in themselves, their efforts, value systems, culture, religion and their outlook on life. He concluded that Blacks could not be conscious of themselves and yet remain in bondage. They wanted to attain the envisioned self, which is a free self.⁹⁰

⁸⁷ B. Goba, *The Black Consciousness Movement: Its impact on Black Theology*, in I.J. Mosala and B. Tlhaagale (eds), *The unquestionable right to be free: Essays in Black Theology* (Skotaville: Johannesburg, 1986), p. 66. See also B. Goba, *An agenda for Black Theology, Hermeneutics for social change* (Skotaville: Johannesburg, 1988).

⁸⁸ Heffernan, *Limpopo Legacy ...*, p. 70.

⁸⁹ Mosibudi Mangena was born in Tzaneen on 7 August 1947. He matriculated at Hebron Training Institute in 1969. He then enrolled for a BSc Degree at the University of Zululand. In 1971 he became an active member of the South African Students Organisation (SASO) after being elected to the Students Representative Council (SRC), an affiliate of SASO. At the end of 1971 he discontinued his studies, due to victimization by the University for his political activities and moved back to Pretoria where he became an active member of the local SASO branch and later was elected chairperson. In mid-1972, Mangena was instrumental in convening the interim structure of the Black People’s Convention (BPC) in Hammanskraal on 17 December 1972, where he was elected as the BPC national organizer. In June 1973 he was arrested in the Johannesburg offices of the BPC and detained under Section 6 of the Terrorism Act, leading to his incarceration without trial, for over three months in a Port Elizabeth jail. Finally, on 3 October 1973 he was convicted and sentenced to five years imprisonment on Robben Island. On his release he was banned for five years and banished to Mahwelereng, near Potgietersrus. For more information see M. Mangena, *Quest for true humanity: Selected speeches and writings* (Johannesburg: Bayakha Books, 1996), p. 1.

⁹⁰ M. Mangena, *On Your Own: Evolution of Black Consciousness in South Africa/Azania*, (Braamfontein: Skotaville Publishers, 1989), p. 151

Interestingly, for all BC associated organisations, emphasis was laid on psychological liberation, before physical revolution. Therefore, ideological cohesion was key for SASO. Such a trend was notable also in other provinces, where SASO became vibrant. Although SASO rejected all forms of cooperation with Whites, they however, did not accept all Blacks as Blacks. They rejected collaboration with the Bantustan leaders, whom they dismissed as ‘government stooges’, and the Black police were seen as part of the system. Collectively they were also referred to as non-whites. The central ideas of SASO were, the encouragement of self-reliance, self-pride, and self-confidence among Black people, as well as severing of political ties with Whites.⁹¹

Here SASO accepted the premise that before Black people could join the open society, they should first close their ranks to form themselves into a solid group to oppose the ‘definite White racism’, and to work out their direction and bargain from a position of strength. Regarding integration, the organisation believed that Black liberation could not be realised in an atmosphere of mistrust and suspicion. Its members contended that integration was not to mean assimilation of Blacks into an already established set of norms, drawn up by the White society. Conversely, it encouraged Black solidarity amongst all the oppressed people of colour under the term ‘Black’.⁹² A large corpus of literature exists concerning the impact of SASO leading to the formation of AZAPO in the late 1970s. Studies have revealed that the politicised nexus from SASO to AZAPO created complex, but fertile grounds for the spread of students’ political conscientisation.

In her book *‘Beyond our wildest dreams’: The United Democratic Front and the Transformation of South Africa*, Ineke van Kessel provides and accounts on the activities of the UDF with a few pages dedicated to AZAPO nationally. She explains that when the Black people’s Convention (BPC)⁹³ was banned in October 1977, AZAPO was launched in 1978 as its successor organisation.

⁹¹ M.L. Snail, *The Antecedence, and the Emergence of B.C.M. in South Africa*, 1993, p. 251.

⁹² B.J. Liebenberg and S.B. Spies, *South Africa in the 20th Century*, (Pretoria: Van Schaik, 1993), p. 458.

⁹³ The Black People’s Convention (BPC) was an umbrella organisation of the BCM. The latter originated on mostly white liberal university campuses. Numerous campaigns carried out under its aegis were executed by units that adhered to BPC’s BC doctrine. BPC and its BC ideology served as inspiration for both the historic student revolt in Soweto on June 16, 1976, and the Pro-Frelimo march organised by University of the North students. This explains why many of the campaigns carried out in the 1970s are linked to organisations that completely accepted the BC concept and acknowledged BPC. A series of conferences that were attended by several organisations in 1971 preceded its inauguration. On 24 April 1971, the inaugural BPC meeting took place in Bloemfontein. The primary focus of this meeting was to deal with issues of strategy and tactics, as well as the coordination of the efforts of several Black organisations with a national focus at the time. The primary organisations represented, were the Old Boys Association of St. Peter’s Seminary, the Inter-denominational African Ministers’ Association of South Africa (IDAMASA), the South African Student Organization (SASO), the Young Women’s Christians Association (YWCA), and the

Throughout its entire history, the BCP had focused on race, aspiring to give a positive content to Black identity in the belief that psychological self-liberation was necessary for any political emancipation in SA. Realising this shortcoming, AZAPO moved away from the narrow exclusive focus on race towards class analysis. Although in theory, this could be interpreted as opening the way for cooperation with the White left, AZAPO, however, held the view that looking at the South African conditions, race and class coincided and could not be separated on political grounds.

In what could be interpreted as a controversial statement, Van Kessel writes: “The Black Consciousness position was that White people had a role to play in advancing the process of change in the White community. AZAPO did not want White people in ‘organisations of the oppressed’, nor did it want to participate in joint programs with organisations that had White members”.⁹⁴ A sense of pride and Black identity through association with AZAPO brought joy, strength and confidence. However, it should be noted that this exclusive sense of identifying with this organisation, for some of its members, created the illusion of a unique identity, which in many cases could carry with it the perception of distance and divergence from other political groups. In other words, within this solidary group, members viewed themselves as having suitable and sustainable instigation for immediate political emancipation.

With the banning of BCM constituent organisations on 19 October 1977, the movement was paralysed.⁹⁵ Other members were detained. As mentioned in chapter one, after the banning of

Association for the Educational and Cultural Advancement of the African People of South Africa (ASSECA). It was decided during the meeting to form an ad hoc committee to extend invitations to a larger conference. The 1972 BPC members' meeting was held in Pietermaritzburg from July 8–10. Its leadership included, A. Mayatula (President), Mthuli ka Shezi (Vice- President), Drake Koka (Secretary-General), Saths Cooper (Publicity-Relations Officer), and A. Dlamini (National Organiser). At its congress in December 1972, the BPC elected a new executive under the leadership of Winifred Kgwane, making her the first woman president of a national liberation movement in South Africa. Other members of the executive were Chris Mokotitso (Vice-President), Sipho Buthelezi (Secretary-General), Mosibudi Mangena (National Organiser) and Saths Cooper (Public Relations Officer). For more information see T.R. Kono, ‘Marxism and Black Nationalism in South Africa (Azania): A comparative and critical analysis of the ideological conflict and consensus between Marxism and Nationalism in the ANC, the PAC and the BCM, 1920-1980, PhD Thesis, Brandeis University, 1982, pp. 254-255; X. Mangcu, *Biko: A Biography* (Cape Town: Tafelberg, 2012), p. 188; Historical Papers, William Cullen Library, Wits, ‘*Black People’s Convention: Minutes of the Second Annual National Congress of the Black People’s Convention held at St. Peter’s Conference Centre in Hammanskraal, near Pretoria from 15th, 16th and 17th December 1973*, Karis and Gerhardt Collection.

⁹⁴ I. van Kessel, “*Beyond our wildest dreams*”: *The United Democratic Front and the transformation of South Africa*, (Charlottesville and London: University Press of Virginia, 2000), p. 18.

⁹⁵ Among organisations which were banned included SASO, BPC, SASM, SSRC, BCP, Zimele Trust, ASSECA, Black People’s Association (BPA), Black Women’s Federation (BWF), Border Youth Organisation (BYO), Eastern Cape Youth Organisation (ECYO), Natal Youth Organisation (NYO), Transvaal Youth Organisation (TYO), Western Cape Youth Organisation (WCYO), Union of Black Journalists (UBJ), Medupe Writer’s Association (MWA), and the Christian Institute (CI).

BCM aligned organisations, a meeting was held in May 1978 in Roodepoort, which was attended by 60 delegates from different parts of the country, who were resolved on the formation of AZAPO. The elected interim committee consisted of Ishmael Mkhabela (chairman), Hermant Washmarae (Vice-President), Lybon Mabasa (Secretary), and four additional members, namely, Khehla Mthembu, Simon Dyakala, Makhuge Manenzhe and Sammy McGosh. Amidst all attempts by the apartheid regime to thwart any progress in the formalisation of AZAPO as a formidable organisation, under repressive conditions, the interim structure worked tirelessly and delivered the inaugural conference of AZAPO in Roodepoort on 30 September 1979. The conference was attended by 200 delegates. During this conference, the following people were elected in the Executive Committee (EC): Curtis Nkondo (President), Nombulelo Melane (Vice-President), George Wauchope (Publicity Secretary), Letsatsi Mosala (National Organiser), and Sammy Toubatla (General-Secretary).

2.3 The formation of AZAPO: A regional perspective

The above section of this chapter shows the background to the events leading to the formation of AZAPO nationally. Here, the researcher attempted to concentrate on the regional aspect of AZAPO, namely, the Free State Province. The argument in this section is embedded in the developments and the political climate of the province in the late 1970s and early 1980s. It should be noted that the oppressive nature of the apartheid regime cultivated the new kinds of political cultures and identities, which grew beyond the earlier politicisation of the late 1960s and early 1970s of political existence, coupled with a fragmented liberation philosophy. The latter materialised as grassroots organisations, which included institutions of higher learning, schools, churches, and broader community participation. Elaborating on this, Ayanda Sphelele Ndlovu explains that it was during this period that political activism in many townships intensified. SASO and later AZAPO were persistent to produce student leaders, whose abilities were remarkable and destined to change the country's political landscape.⁹⁶ For both organisations, with SASO as the frontrunner of AZAPO, the spirit of self-preservation, self-determination and self-reliance proved to be crucial. However, both needed resources for sustainability.

⁹⁶ A.S. Ndlovu, 'The philosophical contribution of Robert Sobukwe and Steve Biko to the liberation struggle in South Africa', *MA Dissertation*, University of the Free State, Bloemfontein, 2022, p. 83.

In this section one tends to agree with Janet Cherry and Pat Gibbs when writing about the Eastern Cape: ‘The 1970s saw a renewal upsurge in resistance against the apartheid regime manifested in such events as the 1973 strikes in Durban and the growth of the Black Consciousness Movement (BCM) and the corresponding growth of new organisations including the South African Student Movement (SASM) and various other Black Consciousness (BC) organisations’.⁹⁷ Likewise, the subtle political mobilisation also took place in the Free State. This is aptly captured by Mbulelo V. Mzamane, Bavusile Maaba and Nkosinathi Biko when stating: ‘By early 1972, SASO branches catering for students in high schools were either in existence or in formation in far-flung places such as Umtata, Kimberley, and Port Elizabeth in the Cape, Pietermaritzburg in Natal, Pretoria and Springs in the Transvaal, and Bloemfontein in the Orange Free State.’⁹⁸

Although Itumeleng Mosala (erstwhile President of AZAPO) played at the national level in the politics of AZAPO, he hailed from Bloemfontein, thus, his national profile also played a significant role in Mangaung. In an exclusive interview conducted with him by the researcher, he emphasized the basics and foundation of his organization to have focused on mental liberation as propagated by the likes of Biko and Pityana. He stressed that BC philosophy from where AZAPO traces its origins, was about the ‘attitude of mind’ and ‘way of life’ by Blacks. This, he argued, would enable Blacks to rid themselves of the inferiority complex against the Whites. This became a frame of mind through which Blacks rejected all value systems that made them ‘foreigners’ in the country of their birth.⁹⁹

With this study focusing on the Free State with reference to Mangaung, it is important to trace the establishment of AZAPO in the area. Most importantly, this should be interpreted with the national developments in mind. The national structures of the organisation were aware of the apartheid regime’s repression to thwart its programmes and mobilisation strategies. In attempts to coordinate the regions, consultation took place via the national leadership. Like in other regions, in the Free State, there were also clandestine meetings and discussions held. Many of those who attended

⁹⁷ J. Cherry and P. Gibbs, ‘The Liberation Struggle in the Eastern Cape’, in South African Democracy Education Trust (ed.), *The Road to Democracy in South Africa*, vol. 2, (1970-1980), (Pretoria: UNISA Press, 2006), p. 569.

⁹⁸ M.V. Mzamane, B.B. Maaba and N. Biko, ‘The Black Consciousness Movement in South Africa, 1970-1980’, in South African Democracy Education Trust (ed.), *The Road to Democracy in South Africa*, vol. 2, (1970-1980), (Pretoria: UNISA Press, 2006), p. 138.

⁹⁹ Personal collection: *Interview with Prof. Itumeleng Mosala*, Rhema Church, 22 March 2019.

these meetings were adherents of the BCM. The main challenge was to link the Black peoples' struggle with some evident, specific and immediate concerns of the communities in those areas.

In an interview with Fikile Qithi, former Deputy-President of AZAPO Free State Province and ex-Robben Island political prisoner, recruiting people to AZAPO was premised on quality and politically trusted activists. In justifying the above, he alluded to the fact of AZAPO following in the footsteps of the BPC to become an organisation of what he called 'cadres of revolution'. He apportioned this to an explanation that 'a cadre' was an individual who had achieved sufficient political development to be able to interpret the larger directives emanating from the central authority, made them his own, and convey them as an orientation to the masses.¹⁰⁰ In a system that is beginning to build socialism, a cadre must be developed politically. Therefore, he viewed the cadre as a creator, a leader of high standard, a technician with a good political level, capacity for sacrifice and watchwords of the revolution.¹⁰¹

2.4 The influence of Mozambique and Angola's independence on the BC and later on the formation of AZAPO

There were many influences that contributed directly or indirectly to the formation of AZAPO. One such influence was Mozambique and Angola's independence. This not only influenced AZAPO, but also instilled hope to many South Africans to the attainment of freedom and independence before long as well. Here the researcher argues that the year 1975 was a fruitful year for the liberation struggle in SA that saw Mozambique and Angola gaining independence on 25 June and 11 November 1975, respectively. With these developments, the balance of forces rapidly shifted in favour of liberation movements in southern Africa. The fact that the apartheid regime was politically and drastically weakened after its unsuccessful military intervention in Angola, where it sought to impose the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) as a ruling party over the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola, to a certain extent gave hope to the South Africans about the imminent freedom of the country.¹⁰²

¹⁰⁰ Interview with F. Qithi, conducted by Masilonyane Lefuo, Bloemfontein, 20 May 2018.

¹⁰¹ D. Deutschmann, *Che Guevara: A New Society, Reflections for today's world*, (Melbourne: Ocean Press, 1991), pp. 126-129.

¹⁰² S. Manong, *If We Must Die: An Autobiography of a former Commander of Umkhonto we Sizwe*, (Johannesburg: Nkululeko Publishers, 2015), p. 119.

A year before the independence of Mozambique in 1975, the frontrunners of AZAPO, namely, the BPC and SASO, organised 'Pro Frelimo' rallies in support of Mozambique's independence. The independence of the former Portuguese colony and the attainment of independence by most African countries was greeted with great enthusiasm, and it served to boost confidence and gave hope that freedom could be attained in South Africa.¹⁰³ Attesting to Mozambique's influence, the *Rand Daily Mail* reported that the event of taking over the power by FRELIMO in Mozambique, reverberated beyond this country and was seized on by activists across the borders in SA. These achievements by Mozambique were widely celebrated in SA and heralded the turn of the majority to rule in the region. During the late 1974, there was an increased scope of its activism to regional and local areas. Students under SASO became instrumental in the coordination of a series of rallies around the country to celebrate FRELIMO's victory. These 'Viva-FRELIMO' rallies were planned for major cities – Durban, Cape Town, and Johannesburg, as well as for the Black University campuses of Fort Hare, the University of Zululand, the University of the Western Cape, and the University of the North at Turfloop.¹⁰⁴

On the above 'Viva FRELIMO' events, Heffernan explains:

To publicise the events, SASO announced that several FRELIMO leaders would be crossing the border to address South African crowds at the rallies. They also posted placards with pro-FRELIMO and anti-apartheid slogans. One of these placards 'so incensed' Cornelius Koekemoer, a Durban resident, that when he saw it two days before the scheduled rally he tore it down and sent a telegram to Prime Minister Vorster asking for government intervention to prohibit the planned demonstration... Koekemoer's telegram made it to the office of Minister of Justice Jimmy Kruger, where on 24 September, one day before the scheduled rallies, the minister issued a comprehensive ban on the rallies, under the Riotous Assemblies Act. It prohibited any public gatherings 'encouraged or promoted by or on behalf of' SASO and the BPC, effective immediately, and until late October.¹⁰⁵

She further alluded:

¹⁰³ J. Pampallis, *Foundations of the New South Africa* (New York: Zed Books, 1991), p. 250.

¹⁰⁴ *Rand Daily Mail*, 'Kruger to stop mass SASO rally', 24 September 1974. See also National Archives of South Africa (henceforth NASA), *Whites urged to stay away*, NASA File, MJU727 MP17/2/3.

¹⁰⁵ Heffernan, *Limpopo's Legacy* ..., p. 88.

It is hard to be certain of the causation behind the banning order; it is likely that police were already monitoring the preparations for the rallies, particularly the highly publicised Durban one, but Koekemoer's telegram, and perhaps more importantly the publicity it gained in the press, seems to have influenced Kruger's decision to proceed with the ban... The ban amounted to an effective ban on all SASO and BPC meetings, movements, and events for nearly a month, though both SASO and the BPC were still legal organisations at the time... The second Viva-FRELIMO rally that proceeded despite the ban was nearly a thousand kilometres away, at the altogether less likely rural campus of the University of the North. In contrast to events in Durban, Turfloop was almost entirely ignored in the pre-rally controversy.¹⁰⁶

Despite the above measures taken by the apartheid regime, the act of defiance was announced in the media by Muntu Myeza that the rallies were to continue. In Durban, during the gathering, nine BPC/SASO leaders were arrested. They were charged under the Terrorism Act for causing disorder at the time of the FRELIMO support rallies, and that they conspired to transform the state by unconstitutional, revolutionary and/or violent means.¹⁰⁷ The charge sheet named 14 accused, including one woman, Nomsisi Kraai. Her charge sheet was later withdrawn, and the other four accused were set free and the remaining nine were given a new charge sheet, a process that culminated in the SASO/BPC Trial.¹⁰⁸ The nine accused were Saths Cooper, Muntu Myeza, Mosiuoa Lekota, Aubrey Mokoape, Nkwenkwe Nkomo, Pandelani Nefolovhodwe, Karabo Sedibe, Strini Moodley and Zithulele Cindi. They were charged with conspiracy to overthrow the state, and to cripple the SA economy by advocating for foreign disinvestment against Pepsi Cola, Kodak, IBM, Barclays Bank, and other foreign firms.¹⁰⁹ Biko was given the responsibility of giving evidence on behalf of the accused. The defence lawyer was Advocate David Soggot. Cross-examination for the prosecution was led by L. Attwell, and the trial judge was Judge Boshoff. The trial was equated with the 'Treason Trial'¹¹⁰ for the Congress Alliance, both in terms of the

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.* See also NASA, *Republic of South Africa Government Gazette*, vol. III, No. 4415, Cape Town, 25 September 1974 in File, MJU 727 MP17/2/3; *Rand Daily Mail*, 'Cheers and boos', 24 September 1974; *Durban News*, 'Frelimo Secrecy', 25 September 1974.

¹⁰⁷ G.M. Gerhart, *Black Power in South Africa: Evolution of an Ideology*, (California: University of California Press, 1979), p. 298.

¹⁰⁸ A. M-Africa, *Touched by Biko: The Interviews*, 2017, p.17.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁰ Throughout 1955 and 1956 the Special Branch conducted a series of raids on offices and private homes of hundreds of opponents of apartheid. Documents, letters, pamphlets, even pieces of clothing were seized in preparation for a

fearlessness of the leadership and the content of the message that both trials sent out to the Black community and the world at large.

On the ‘Viva-FRELIMO rallies, in her book entitled, *Now You Know How Mapetla Died*, Zikhona Valela writes:

FRELIMO had embarked on a liberation war for its independence, and Mye za recalled Mapetla asking whether the rallies would be a space to call for a similar approach. In response, Myeza said: ‘We would not concern ourselves with the method they had used to attain liberation, but the fact that Mozambique was liberated by FRELIMO, and we were to use this occasion to preach Black Consciousness’. The FRELIMO rallies were intended to be nation-wide celebrations in solidarity with Mozambique and the movement led by Samora Machel.¹¹¹

The World newspaper article entitled, ‘Black consciousness means big change – witness’ carried out a story of JC van der Merwe, a senior lecturer in political science at the Rand Afrikaans University where he told the Supreme Court judge that ‘it would be difficult to apply Black consciousness in South Africa without a complete turnabout in the system’. Van der Merwe was cross-examined by Soggot, because he was appearing for the SASO nine charged under the Terrorism Act. Referring to the BC, Van der Merwe stated: ‘... it would not necessarily be violent, but it would mean a big turnabout before its values can be realized’.¹¹²

The trial gave Biko an opportunity to lay out the rationale and the methodology of the movement without falling into the trap of incriminating either himself or his comrades. All the accused were sentenced to at least six years in jail.¹¹³

Writing about this trial, Michael Lobban indicated that:

On 25 September 1974, the South African Students’ Organisation and the Black People’s Convention held two rallies to celebrate the independence of Mozambique. Within two

show trial. On the morning of 5 December 1956, policemen were dispatched all over the country and targeted the homes of the Congress Alliance leaders and arrested them. Through this clampdown by the police, 156 people were arrested (104 Africans, 23 Whites, 21 Indians and 8 Coloureds) and all charged with High Treason. This trial attracted a lot of attention in South Africa and abroad, as the case was remanded on many occasions. It disrupted lives of many who had to come to court on almost a daily basis for the case to be postponed. At the end the court acquitted and discharged all the accused.

¹¹¹ Z. Valela, *Now You Know How Mapetla Died: The story of a Black Consciousness Martyr*, (Cape Town: Tafelberg, 2022), pp. 68-69.

¹¹² *The World*, ‘Black consciousness means a big change – witness’, 25 November 1975, p. 2.

¹¹³ Mangcu, *Biko: A Biography*, pp.194-195.

weeks, 29 Black Consciousness leaders were in detention, as the State prepared for a major trial of the Black Consciousness Movement, which would see nine leaders of BPC and SASO facing conspiracy charges under the Terrorism Act. The State sought to put on trial the actions and ideas of the movement since its foundation, to portray it as a revolutionary movement led by self-conscious conspirators ... The State thus charged the accused with a conspiracy to bring about revolutionary change and/or the promotion of racial hostility. A second count charged seven of them with organising the rallies with intent to promote racial hostility. These two counts were mutually reinforcing: the rallies were the confrontational fruition of the conspiracy; the conspiracy explained what the rallies were all about. The conspiracy was to be found primarily in the rhetoric of the organisation, its publications calling on even children to 'talk, eat, live, cry and play the struggle for liberation'.¹¹⁴

It was interesting to note that when the developments of the FRELIMO rallies happened, the *Beeld* newspaper ran a front-page story the day after the rally, telling its readers that blood had run in Durban and Pietersburg when crowds and police clashed. Contrasting the above, by the next day, the same newspaper claimed that police dogs in Durban had prevented a bloodbath, its leading article praising their firm action and wearing off a dangerous situation in the country. Another Afrikaans newspaper, *Die Burger* was even stronger, comparing SASO's commemoration of FRELIMO's victory with the internationalism of the ANC and PAC in the 1950s, which led to the 'bloodbath' of 1960. For the next week, the press was dominated by comparisons with 1960, seeing the FRELIMO rallies as the start of a new Sharpeville style of agitation to be nipped in the bud at all costs.

2.5 AZAPO: Constitution and Policy

It was interesting to observe how AZAPO leaders and followers viewed themselves within the organisation. As shown by its Constitution and Policy, one observed that for the organisation to flourish, it was because of its ideology, rather than organizational strength, which attracted the attention of the apartheid regime. Adam Small challenged the simplistic understanding of what AZAPO stood for by indicating: 'The primary form of expression for us, will be the manifestation

¹¹⁴ M. Lobban, 'Black Consciousness on Trial: The BPC/SASO Trial, 1974-1976', *African Studies Seminar Paper presented at the African Studies Institute, University of the Witwatersrand, August 1990*, p. 1.

of our blackness time and again, and again, whether Whites understand this or not, will not be the point at all. We are not there for Whites'.¹¹⁵

AZAPO's standpoint was clear from the outset. This is evident through its preamble, which states: 'Whereas we, the Black People of Azania, (a) Conscious of the adverse physical and psychological effects of centuries of oppression on Black people, and on Black workers in particular; and (b) Aware of the determination of Black workers to gain freedom and justice, and their desire to occupy their rightful place in the land of their birth; and (c) Realising that the system in Azania is based on White racism, capitalism and neo-colonialism; and (d) Acknowledging that Black people in general, and Black workers in particular are responsible for the creation of the bulk of the wealth in Azania; and (e) Mindful of the fact that the system seeks to render Black workers powerless and perpetually subservient by creating and utilising tactics of divide and rule; and (f) Alive to the danger that the system shall always endeavour to divide and frustrate the liberation efforts of the people towards true emancipation; and (g) Conscious of the desire of Black people to liberate themselves from the system; and (h) Motivated and inspired by our individual and collective quest for liberation, return of the land to its rightful owners, justice, peace and equality of persons; and therefore hereby resolve in active pursuit of the above, to found a National Liberation and Political Organisation'.¹¹⁶

2.6 AZAPO and Anti-Charterist tendencies

It should be noted that the late 1970s and early 1980s saw the resurgence of strong opposition to the apartheid regime. Many of such organisations responded by seeking strategies that could build on urban militancy and frustrate the regime's ambitions of containing its opponents at all costs. This was aptly covered by Seekings when explaining: 'The uprising [reference to the 1976 Soweto Uprising] deepened a nascent crisis of direction within the BC movement, which had dominated extra-parliamentary politics through the first half of the 1970s... The uprising indicated the potency of collective action and exposed the limits of an existing organisation inside the country, prompting a variety of organisation-building and alliance-building initiatives'.¹¹⁷ Furthermore,

¹¹⁵ A. Small, 'Blackness vs Nihilism', *SASO Newsletter*, August 1971.

¹¹⁶ The Constitution of the Azanian People's Organisation.

¹¹⁷ J. Seekings, *The UDF: A History of the United Democratic Front in South Africa, 1983-1991*, (Cape Town, Oxford, Athens: David Philip, James Currey and Ohio University Press, 2000), p. 30.

Seekings notes that in Durban, for example, before 1976, there was a group of BC leaders who had forged ties with the African National Congress (ANC). This happened after they had been engaged and influenced by the South African Communist Party (SACP) literature and steered away from the BC philosophy. Key figures of this group included Pravin Gordan and Yunus Mahomed, both activists from the University of Durban-Westville.¹¹⁸

In her study on the ideological divisions in SA youth politics, Heffernan made an important observation that such divisions were caused by ideological affiliations, like Africanism, Charterism and BC.¹¹⁹ From this it was clear to her that student politics were not immune from ideological influences of the mid-1980s in SA. Without specifically focusing on BC, Michael Devara Chapman's research, on the history of student activism at the University of Fort Hare (UFH), adds to the complexities of understanding students' politics and ideological differences in SA. Here, Chapman addresses the aspects and impact of the differences between the Charterists and adherents of BC at the UFH in the 1980s. His observations were that the ideological debates between these two groupings had profound effects on student resistance at UFH. His analysis makes a conclusion that saw the Charterists exhibiting an edge of being powerful against the BC. He contends that despite the few BC adherents at the institution, they managed to provoke political debates. In his findings, Chapman provides a narrative on how BC was side-lined and silenced by the Charterists from the mainstream political debates on campus.¹²⁰

According to Jeremy Seekings, ideologically the mid-1980s was a period marked by the dramatic resurgence of Charterism. He refers to the Charterists as embracing an ideology of inclusive nationalism and multi-racialism, associated with the Freedom Charter of 1955. Seekings opined that strategically, the period saw a shift from an intellectual-led transformation of consciousness that had characterised the BCM in the 1970s to focus on mass organisation and collective action in the decades to come. This period and shift, he argued, was initiated by the student-led uprising in 1976-7. Although his assertion that this uprising brought a quiescence and political lull of 15 years in SA politics, however, this turn of events defined a new terrain of the struggle.¹²¹ This

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 32.

¹¹⁹ For more information on this see A. Heffernan, 'Blurred lines and ideological divisions in South African youth politics', *African Affairs*, 115(461), 2016, pp. 664-687.

¹²⁰ R.D. Chapman, *Student Resistance to Apartheid at the University of Fort Hare: Freedom Now, A Degree Tomorrow* (New York and London: Lexington Books, 2016). See also D. Massey, *Under Protest: The rise of student resistance at the University of Fort Hare* (Pretoria: UNISA Press, 2010).

¹²¹ Seekings, *The UDF ...*, p. 29.

happened, despite the ideological tensions that existed between BC members and the Charterists in contestation for political space during the period under discussion.

The formation of the UDF in 1983 brought another political dynamism and had an influence on the ambitions of AZAPO. With these two dominant political forces in SA, the focus was on their differences. Contemporary accounts of this conflict emphasize the ideological divide as the root cause. A closer scrutiny of this conflict reveals the existence of powerful local tensions that reinforced this divide. For example, it should be noted that at its inception in 1979, AZAPO adopted the BC philosophy. Thus, in its four years of its existence from 1979 to 1983, AZAPO included in its rank, activists increasingly drawn to non-racialism, as articulated in the Freedom Charter. To justify the above, Seekings further notes: ‘Curtis Nkondo was elected president, in the mistaken belief that he was either PAC-inclined or would unite different groups. In fact, Nkondo used his position to strengthen a Charterist network outside AZAPO and reduce the chances of it becoming a ‘third force’ to rival ANC’. He worked very closely with COSAS, and with Charterist university students within the newly formed Azanian Students Organisation (AZASO).

2.7 AZAPO and the National Forum (NF)

The 1982 proposed constitutional amendment gave the officially defined Coloured and Indian communities the right to vote for their representations in racially separated Houses of Parliament through the NP regime’s creation of Tri-Cameral Parliament. The regime’s proposals were in part designed to separate and win back these two population groups from their growing involvement in the popular opposition politics.¹²²

To counter this move by the NP, the NF was established with a popular slogan, namely: ‘I will only vote for Socialist Azania’. The proceedings of this establishment were facilitated and chaired by people, such as Sath Cooper, Lybon Mabasa and Cosiba Ntloko (from Bloemfontein). Mangaung was also represented in the establishment of the NF. Those in attendance, included Elijah Masilo ‘Rasta’ Lefuo, Ephraim Magic Kgotseng and Fikile Qithi. The latter was later elected Deputy Vice-President of AZAPO, Free State Province.¹²³

¹²² Marx, A.W., *Lessons of struggle: South African Internal Opposition 1960-1990* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), p.114.

¹²³ Interview with Fikile Qithi, conducted by Masilonyane Lefuo, Bloemfontein, 20 May 2018.

At the end of the two-day discussion, delegates unanimously voted for the adoption of the Azanian People's Manifesto, a document which identified 'racial capitalism' as the enemy and was based on four basic principles, namely: anti-racism; anti-imperialism; anti-collaboration with the ruling class; and independent working-class organisations. For AZAPO, this manifesto superseded the other two historical documents which were the Freedom Charter and 'Towards A Free Azanian Projection: Future state of the now banned Black People's Convention (BIC)'. The Azanian People's Manifesto became the article of faith for the National Forum and AZAPO.¹²⁴

Neville Alexander in his chapter on *The National Forum*, gives a brief synopsis on the establishment of this forum and how it contributed to the liberation struggle. Here Alexander notes that the National Forum was the consequence of oppressive legislations by the apartheid regime.¹²⁵ He explains the initiative started as early as November 1982 when a delegation of the AZAPO National Executive Council, which included the likes of Saths Cooper, Lybon Mabasa and others, who had been released from Robben Island, visited different parts of the country to assess the political situation and determine whether the ground was fertile for the establishment of the forum. As mentioned previously, this started with a series of meetings with activists in Cape Town.

In these meetings it was agreed to request AZAPO's General Council, which was expected to meet in December 1982, to consider launching a national political campaign against the apartheid regime. These meetings and discussions, as confirmed by Alexander, were the seeds from which the national forum grew.¹²⁶ Alexander writes: 'The AZAPO General Council resolved to create a committee, which would call a national forum together to take stock of the situation of the oppressed people of South Africa and to give coherent direction to the people's struggle in view of the 'reformist' moves of the Botha regime. In the next two months, prominent individuals, who

¹²⁴ Mngxitama, A., Alexander, A., and Gibson, N.C., *Biko lives! Contesting the legacies of Steve Biko*, (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2008), p. 141.

¹²⁵ The birth of the National Forum was the direct response of a large, but mainly urban segment of the oppressed Black people of SA to the strategy of the apartheid regime, that of 'divide and rule'. The Riekert-Wiehahn report of 1979 inaugurated the expansion of political space that made it easier for political activists to mobilise the poor urban population in trade unions, civic associations, and youth organisations. The Koornhof Bills and the proposals of the president's council created the conditions against which the struggle was fought in factories, offices and mines, and in which townships, location and squatter communities could be politicised and radicalised. These measures were immediately castigated by all progressive political core groups as being 'too little too late'. They were seen as half-hearted attempts to dupe the West into believing that there was genuine movement away from apartheid, whereas they were intended to create a system of neo-apartheid, based on 'ethnic', rather than 'racial' groups. For more information see N. Alexander, 'The National Forum', in I. Liebenberg, F. Lortan, B. Nel, and G. van der Westhuizen (eds.), *The Long March: The story of the struggle for liberation in South Africa* (Pretoria: Penrose Book Printers, 1994), p. 199.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 200.

represented significant or influential constituencies among the oppressed, were invited to constitute the National Forum Committee (NFC)'.¹²⁷ The NF placed the question of socialism firmly on the Azanian/South African agenda. Alexander further recalls:

The AZAPO General Council had in fact deliberately decided not to launch a political campaign of resistance against the tricameral/Black local authorities' dispensation under the umbrella of AZAPO, to effect maximum unity of the oppressed people. For, already at this time, the struggle for hegemony between the Charter Movement and the Black Consciousness (BC) or, more generally, the Azanian Movement had begun to bedevil the liberation struggle of the people of South Africa. At a superficial level, the differences between the two groups seemed to be about the participation of people classified as 'White' in the struggle for liberation. There were probably thousands of BC adherents for whom this was what the debate and the conflict was all about... On the other hand, this debate and the conflict about permissible tactical and strategic alliances, marked the fundamental difference between the national forum and the UDF, formed as a national alliance of Charter organisations in August 1983.¹²⁸

It should be noted that between January and June 1983, the organisations and groupings, which spearheaded the creation of the NF, particularly AZAPO, the Cape Action League (CAL), the Council of Unions of South Africa (CUSA) and various youth and student groupings, associated with these organisations, unfolded a wave of mass mobilisation in all parts of the country, especially in the larger urban areas. The NF placed the question of socialism firmly on the Azanian/South African agenda.

There were criticisms levelled against this forum. These were as follows: It was constituted as a forum rather than a movement or organisation; the different political tendencies united in the National Forum could not converge, because of mutual suspicion and rigid agendas; although not pronounced as such, the forum competed for political space with the Charterists¹²⁹ organisations, and thus received limited support from the trade unions and churches, etc; with the advent of the United Democratic Front (UDF) with its mass base on the scene, the forum failed to capture the attention of the masses on equal footing with the UDF.¹³⁰ Although the UDF provided a new

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 200-201.

¹²⁹ 'Charterists' were those activists who adhered to the Freedom Charter adopted by the Congress Movement, led by the ANC in 1955 in Kliptown. They believed in inclusive and non-racial politics.

¹³⁰ Alexander, 'The National Forum ...', p. 204.

political home for many individuals with a history in the BC, such as Curtis Nkondo and Popo Molefe, the major organisations in the BC tradition remained outside the UDF. Thus, AZAPO's attempts at building a broader platform, resulted in the launch of the National Forum on 11 and 12 June. It was at this launch, whereby 200 hundred organisations adopted a 'Manifesto of the Azanian People', which declared that the people's struggle should be directed against 'the system of racial capitalism, which holds the people of Azania in bondage for the benefit of the small minority of White capitalists and their allies, the White workers, and the reactionary sections of the Black middle class'.¹³¹

2.8 Conclusion

The chapter provided a historical overview of the formation of AZAPO at a national, as well as at the regional levels. Although the development of the trajectory of AZAPO happened at different epochs from the general history of BC, the chapter showed that one cannot discuss the history of the former without scrutinizing the latter. The formation of AZAPO mirrored similar aspirations of BC, despite the challenges experienced through its formative years. One of the most important aspects of this was how the leaders unfalteringly developed the ideals of BC through the activities of AZAPO nationally and regionally. The chapter highlighted the similarities of BC philosophy as exhibited in AZAPO. Importantly, these developments happened at different times. Perhaps this explains how AZAPO survived all the storms by the apartheid regime until its banning.

¹³¹ H. Barrell, 'The United Democratic Front and National Forum: Their emergence, composition and trends', *South African Review*, 2(6/20), 1984, pp. 11-12.

CHAPTER THREE :

THE IDEOLOGICAL UNDERPINNINGS DEFINING THE AZAPIAN PEOPLE'S ORGANISATION

3.1 Introduction

As stated in the previous two chapters, to understand the basic principles of AZAPO and how it appealed to its members, it is important to appreciate how the organisation used Black Consciousness (BC) to its advantage. Therefore, it should not be surprising when the researcher makes constant reference to the BC philosophy in attempts to unpack and advance the arguments in this chapter. BC had dominated extra-parliamentary politics through the first half of the 1970s. As mentioned in the previous chapters, BC had been established amidst the demoralisation of the 1960s and in response prioritized struggles around culture and identity. However, critics identified its weaknesses as the neglect of broad organisation-building and collective action.

As it is shown here, through AZAPO, the researcher argued that its Constitution and Policy was value driven. First, AZAPO was determined to deal with Black solidarity. This was a priority for the organisation, because fragmentation of the Black people made it easy for the apartheid regime to apply the 'divide and rule' principle with success. It embraced the principle that Black South Africans should be united first to successfully challenge the might of the apartheid regime. Second, Black people had to be directly involved in the liberation struggle. Thus, self-initiated programmes had to be advanced by the Black people themselves to realise their ultimate goals of liberation. Third, the re-establishment of the humanity of Black people was a priority for AZAPO. By doing so, Black people would be embarking on their own spiritual upliftment.

At the centre was the problem of an inferiority complex from the Black people. AZAPO was content that the BC philosophy was not just that, but a state of mind and a way of life. Blacks had to live the BC philosophy through their actions, which were to be liberatory in nature. The leaders of AZAPO realised that given the material conditions of the Black people at the time of its formation, it was prudent for adherence to the BC philosophy. Therefore, the subsequent sections of this chapter trace how AZAPO, using its constitution and policy framework, attempted to achieve the above-mentioned priorities. To fully comprehend the foundational and policy

principles of AZAPO, it is important to tap into the influences the 1976 Soweto uprising had on its establishment.

Explaining the importance of ideologies for political parties and organisations, in her MA dissertation, Letitia Rohanlall categorized ideologies according to three main domains, namely, the political; socio-economic; and the social-cultural. To elucidate more on this, she uses an intra-domain approach to identify within the major ideologies and domains. Using a sample of 13 parties (including AZAPO) in South Africa (SA), her findings point that there is a left-right dimension, thus suggesting that the country is divided into right-wing and left-wing parties. She contends these right-wing and left-wing divides have undertones, reflecting liberalism, socialism, communism, conservatism and nationalism. These broadly make up the ideologies present among these parties.

In line with the above argument, some parties exhibit predominantly centre-right based tendencies with liberal and conservative elements. In the socio-economic domain, parties are predominantly centre left, based on modern liberal or social democratic elements. In the social-cultural domain, parties are made up of centre-right, which is based on liberal and nationalist elements, and centre-left, which is based on libertarian elements.¹³² According to Tsoeu Petlane, a distinction should be made, regarding ethnically, ideologically and regionally or geographically based parties. He contends that the PAC and AZAPO fall under ‘ideological’ parties (leftist), whereas some, such as the Minority Front (MF) and the United Christian Democratic Party (UCDP) are considered ‘ethnic’ and ‘regional’ parties. This explanation by Petlane suggests that other parties are void of an ideological base and this base is just reserved for parties who have it.¹³³

3.2 AZAPO in the late 1970s: A period of intellectual and political curiosity

Departing from the above argument of the organisation’s ideological stance, Thabisi Hoeane further explains that AZAPO’s intellectual origins was embedded within the socio-historical challenges that faced the Black people in SA. The organisation took leaf from the BC. In this sense, the party sought to continue to uphold Black Consciousness ‘ideology’ and asserting the centrality

¹³² L. Rohanlall, ‘Party Ideology in South Africa’, *MA Dissertation*, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, 2014, p. i.

¹³³ T. Petlane, ‘AZAPO, MF, PAC and UCDP: Searching for a role and fighting for survival’, in R. Southall and J. Daniel (eds.), *Zunami! The South African Election of 2009* (Jacana Media: Johannesburg, 2009).

of Black people in the politics of SA. Although Hoeane, at some point, described this as being largely like the orientations of the PAC, he, however, states that AZAPO was largely different, because it defined 'Black people' without reference to skin color, but as those who were politically opposed, such as Coloureds and Indians.¹³⁴

The above stance by AZAPO raised intellectual and political curiosity in those who supported it and how this was to be translated to the Black masses. This, the researcher argued in this study, became a critical challenge for the organisation. While AZAPO in its history had adherents, it was to some extent viewed as 'ideological' and as an organisation of intellectuals, rather than a mass-based one. Hoeane further elucidated that AZAPO explicitly embraced radical left ideas and while at the same time arguing for a socialist SA. Here Hoeane also stressed the fact that AZAPO sought to place Black people at the centre and spotlight of the country's politics, economic and cultural liberation.¹³⁵ Both Hoeane and Petlane defined the working class in SA as the 'most crucial component' of the liberation struggle.¹³⁶

As the organisation for the intelligentsia, Kotze and Greyling further alluded: 'Besides its alleged strong support among Black workers, AZAPO is well supported by Black intellectuals and academics. Over the years it has remained more dependent on the support of intellectuals than of the masses; this possibly explains the strong ideological unity within the group'.¹³⁷ Ideologically, AZAPO was vehemently opposed to the participation of liberals and communists within the national liberation movement. The leaders of the organisation maintained that if White liberals and communists were insistent on contribution positively to the struggle for liberation and freedom, they should start by making changes to the hardened attitudes of White South Africans, instead of the latter telling Black people how to respond to the oppressive system.

According to Mosibudi Mangena, an erstwhile president of AZAPO, the Black intelligentsia should be at forefront in providing guidance and articulating the direction for the liberation struggle. However, he lamented the decline of these people in reaching the masses. He apportioned

¹³⁴ T. Hoeane, 'Struggling to represent the left: The Pan Africanist Congress, the Azanian People's Organisation', in J. Piombo and L. Nijzink (eds.), *Electoral Politics in South Africa: Assessing the first democratic decades* (HSRC Press: Cape Town, 2006).

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 192.

¹³⁶ Petlane, p. 182.

¹³⁷ H. Kotze and A. Greyling, *Political Organisations in South Africa, A-Z* (Tafelberg: Cape Town, 1991), p. 67.

this also to the subjective coverage by the media. In his book written in 1996, *Quest for True Humanity: Selected Speeches and Writings*, Mangena among others noted:

In fact, in addition to having been reduced to a nation of servants and workers by White settler-colonialism, we are now a singing and toyi-toying nation. Every day when you open a newspaper, your radio and television, one or the other group of Blacks are singing and toyi-toying against something. Tertiary institution students are toyi-toying against academic and financial exclusions, stokvel Blacks are toyi-toying against the seizure of their assets, squatters are toyi-toying against forced removals and homelessness, workers are toyi-toying against management and so on. This is a manifestation of a very deep malady suffered by the Black community. It is an indication of the fact that we have a bogus political settlement that shines in form but has no content at all.¹³⁸

Furthermore, he added:

The challenge that faces you, as part of the Black intelligentsia, is to add content to the so-called freedom we have. It is your duty to lead our people to genuine freedom by looking beyond the flag, beyond the pomp and ceremony of the trappings of hollow political power. You can do this by studying and unravelling for the masses of our people the essence of their plight. The Afrikaners did it for their people. They were not content with just political power. They gave their people land, jobs, in the parastatals and built assets of Afrikaner economic power through their Sanlams, Volkshouses, Saambous and others... You are educated only to work for others for a salary. No matter how high that salary might appear to be, it is a pittance in relation to the wealth configuration of our country. We should resist the temptation to abandon our people and therefore deny them the effective leadership that our class had offered in the past. In fact, the Black intelligentsia is not doing well at the moment. We are told that most of the intellectual work done in parliament, in the ministries of government and position papers drawn for political parties, are done by White intellectuals. In the general intellectual discourse on the direction our country should take, Black intellectuals are almost anonymous. The few that are active, live in the shadow of their White counterparts.¹³⁹

¹³⁸ M. Mangena, *Quest for true humanity: Selected speeches and writings* (Bayakha Books: Johannesburg, 1996), p. 110.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 113.

The mid-1970s was a period marked by the apartheid regime's repression and oppression. This was also worsened by the uprising of students, which started in Soweto to spread to other townships across the country, leading to the country's ungovernability. School students were able to criticise Bantu Education, using the tools of the new ideology sweeping the country. They were also influenced by BC writings. For example, in many of these writings, Biko's influence was felt at the tertiary and as well as secondary schools. He wrote that colonisation and apartheid were not just about political control and oppression, but also influenced how Black people felt and thought about themselves.

3.3 AZAPO: Constitution and Policy

It was interesting to observe how AZAPO leaders and followers viewed themselves within the organisation. As shown by its Constitution and Policy, one observed that for the organisation to flourish, it was because of its ideology, rather than organisational strength, which attracted the attention of the apartheid regime. Adam Small challenged the simplistic understanding of what AZAPO stood for, by indicating: 'The primary form of expression for us, will be the manifestation of our blackness time and again, and again, whether Whites understand this or not, will not be the point at all. We are not there for Whites'.¹⁴⁰

Here the researcher showed that AZAPO's standpoint was clear from the outset. This is evident through its preamble, which states: 'Whereas we, the Black people of Azania, conscious of the philosophy of Black Consciousness as a living force amongst the majority of our people, and recognising that Black workers particularly, are responsible for creating the wealth of our country ... And further realising that the oppressive system in its effort to render the worker powerless and perpetually subservient, creates and utilizes tactics of divide and rule that gave birth to factionalism and tribalism ... Therefore, resolve to find a political movement, which will express and manifest the aspirations of the Black people in Azania; and to find a movement that will unite all and liberate all from the exploitative and oppressive shackles'.¹⁴¹

¹⁴⁰ A. Small, 'Blackness vs Nihilism', *SASO Newsletter*, August 1971.

¹⁴¹ Historical Papers, William Cullen Library, University of the Witwatersrand (henceforth Wits), *Azanian People's Organisation: Constitution and Policy*, AZAPO/AZASM, File, B1-28, vol. 1, No. 2, 1987, p. 2.

Accordingly, the aims and objectives of AZAPO were as follows: to conscientise, politicise and mobilise Black workers through the philosophy of Black Consciousness, in order to strive for their legitimate rights; to work towards the establishment of an educational system that will respond creatively towards the needs of Azanians; to promote an interpretation of religions as a liberatory philosophy, relevant to our struggle; to promote and encourage research into various problems affecting our people; to expose the oppressive and exploitative system in which our people are denied basic human rights; and to work towards unity of the oppressed, for the just distribution of wealth and power for all people of Azania.¹⁴²

After its formation, AZAPO decided on the following broad aims: to create a political awareness among Black workers and to mobilise them by means of the philosophy of Black Consciousness; to fight for an education system, which would fulfill the demands of the 'Azanians'; to propagate and interpret religion as a liberation philosophy, relevant to the black struggle; to expose the injustices of the system and the exploitation of Blacks; to fight for the unity of the oppressed to distribute the wealth and power among all the people of Africa.¹⁴³

Unlike other organisations, AZAPO was clear about its kind of membership. Referring to this, it states that membership shall be open to Black people only; every member shall subscribe to the principles, aims, policy, goals and philosophy of the organisation; no membership shall be given to persons or organisations whose interests are in conflict with those of AZAPO; membership shall be by individual application and by group affiliation; every member of the organisation shall pay a membership fee, which shall be determined from time-to-time and a monthly subscription fee. Membership shall be renewed annually. Any member or organisation whose interests have subsequently been proven to conflict with those of AZAPO, shall be expelled forthwith.¹⁴⁴

AZAPO has always been a small organisation, but with branches countrywide. Its scope was further limited by a lack of funds. The organisation mainly relied on the membership fees and a small sum of money from abroad. This was also supplemented by donations coming from the South African Council of Churches (SACC).

¹⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 3.

¹⁴³ Kotze and Greyling, pp. 65-66.

¹⁴⁴ Wits, *Azanian People's Organisation: Constitution and Policy*, AZAPO/AZASM, File, B1-28, vol. 1, No. 2, 1987, p. 3.

3.3.1 *Conscientise, Politicise and Mobilise Black workers*

With this clause, it was clear that AZAPO was against what it called, a ‘shallow and multi-racialism’ of the African National Congress (ANC). For AZAPO, non-racialism was the goal of the liberation struggle. To the leadership of AZAPO, mobilising workers was key. The ground was fertile, due to the students’ uprising of 1976, which showed the workers that the apartheid regime could be seriously challenged, despite its military might. Before delving much into the workers and why they were targeted by the organisation, it is prudent to link this with the impact of the Soweto uprising. On this, Hashi K. Tafira wrote: ‘The lasting impact BC had on the political and revolutionary struggle cannot be understated. It confronted White supremacy by raising a consciousness of resistance, whose spark was the 1976 Soweto uprising. BC, however, was seen as counter-conscious, having a tendency to psychologism, or as a counter-ideology, inclined to provoke moral anger’.¹⁴⁵

The organisation’s approach on targeting workers and the developments of the students’ uprising in 1976, led to the emergence of a fully urbanised African working class. AZAPO used that as a mobilisation platform, because these workers were made to demand full inclusion in the country’s economic and political system. In attempts to thwart this approach by AZAPO, the apartheid regime developed a counter-revolutionary strategy, the so-called Total Strategy that encompassed urban policy reforms to pacify the urban African working class, and constitutional reforms to expand the regime’s support base through the inclusion of Coloured and Indian people in a new constitutional arrangement. Thus, as argued by Seekings, opponents of apartheid, inside and outside the country, responded by seeking strategies that could build on urban military and frustrate the regime’s ambitions.¹⁴⁶

The above was also endorsed by Thomas Kono Ranuga, who stated that AZAPO put great emphasis on the crucial role of Black workers as the vanguard of the liberation struggle. The leaders maintained that, through the philosophy of BC, all such workers would be finally

¹⁴⁵ H.K. Tafira, *Black Nationalist Thought in South Africa: The persistence of an idea of liberation* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2016), p. 43.

¹⁴⁶ J. Seekings, *The UDF: A History of the United Democratic Front in South Africa, 1983-1991*, (Cape Town, Oxford, Athens: David Philip, James Currey and Ohio University Press, 2000), pp. 29-30.

politicised and mobilised to fight for their legitimate rights.¹⁴⁷ Therefore, at the shop-floor level, Black workers were destined to play a revolutionary role in the struggle against oppression and exploitation. The organisation declared that:

Realizing the imbalances of power between the owners of capital and Black workers, we acknowledge trade unions as an instrument that can bring about redistribution of power. In the unique situation that is SA, trade unions should go beyond the problems of management and labour. We envisage a persistently militant system of trade unions, which will challenge the discriminatory labour laws of the white minority government and thereby bring about change.¹⁴⁸

Both the BC and later AZAPO were convinced that the role of the Black working class, as the vanguard of the revolution, reaffirmed that the Black workers were the most oppressed and exploited masses of the society, and therefore, constituted the major force in the struggle against oppression. The strategy for the revolution was to be based on the historical, political and organizational experience of the Black working class. From the above evidence, the researcher in this study was convinced that these organisations were consistent with anti-capitalists' and anti-imperialists' line of ideological developments.

Providing context to the above, was that during the 1960s, the country's economy grew, but took a dive in the middle of the 1970s, due to the fall of the gold price and the subsequent rise to inflation. Many workers lost their jobs, fewer jobs were available to jobseekers and the cost of living continued to rise. AZAPO seized the opportunity and organised workers. This also affected students who had left school, as they turned to being cheap labour, due to the scarcity of jobs. The strategy by the apartheid regime was to protect a supply of cheap and obedient labour. The organisation was aware that the regime was making sure that students should not reach the level of education their White counterparts had. This, in return, would provide them with less opportunities to compete with Whites for jobs, thus, subjecting them to working in less-skilled and the lowest-paying positions. The students and teachers who led these protests were heavily influenced by the BC ideology. However, as mentioned in many of the scholarly works, they were not part of a structured political movement and did not have the organisational strength to keep up

¹⁴⁷ T.K. Ranuga, 'Marxism and Black Nationalism in South Africa (Azania): A critical analysis of the ideological conflict and consensus between Marxism and Nationalism in the ANC, the PAC and the BCM, 1920-1980', *PhD Thesis*, Brandeis University, 1983.

¹⁴⁸ *Survey of Race Relations in South Africa*, 33, 1979, p. 50.

the revolutionary activity. As the repression intensified, many students involved in the uprising escaped the security forces by skipping the country to join the ANC or PAC in exile.

Neville Alexander wrote that *Azania Worker* was a journal of the workers, publishing articles on workers' struggle issues in the mid-1980s and indicated that the eradication of workers' exploitation and the elimination of White domination and racism in SA, depended on the role to be played by the workers. Thus, the struggle for liberation should be viewed as a combined one with that of implanting socialism. To achieve the above, the journal resolved that the working class had to play a leading role in this regard. In a special edition of the journal, entitled *The National Question in South Africa*, Alexander stated:

There is a need, as a step forwards, for the building of a working-class organisation for all socialists to engage in discussion. Our journal is offered as an open medium of expression to all socialists, actively involved in the struggle and remains non-sectarian in that it will publish contributions, which may not agree with our own. Without a relevant theory and practice of social change the working class can have no organisation worthy of its leading role. Our journal is further offered as a forum in which socialists from all political currents within the trade unions, student and national liberation movements, can contribute towards the development of a relevant theory and practice of social change, and in which they can exchange experiences and lessons drawn from present and past struggles ... We cannot therefore conceive of a political organisation of the working class in South Africa in isolation from the organisation's, experience and history of the working class'.¹⁴⁹

Alexander further explains:

Because of the peculiarities of capitalist development in South Africa, the only way in which racial discrimination and racial inequality, i.e. national oppression, can be abolished, is through the abolition of the capitalist structures themselves. The only class, however, which can bring into being a (socialist) system, is the black working class. On it, by virtue of its unique historical position, devolves the task of mobilising all the oppressed and exploited classes for the abolition of the system of racial capitalism ... the working class has to devise counter-hegemonic strategies and practices, which prepare the ground, in fact will constitute the ground, upon which the Azanian nation will stand... The positive historical task of the Black worker in solving the national question in South Africa, is the

¹⁴⁹ N. Alexander, 'The National Question in South Africa', *Azania Worker, Special Edition*, 2(2), December 1985, p. 2.

construction of the (socialist) nation of Azania. This construction takes place in all the dimensions of the social formation, i.e. economically, politically and ideologically. Although certain economic forms and structures relevant to a South Africa free of exploitation and oppression, are emerging out of the present struggle, it is in the nature of the process of liberation that the political and ideological construction of the new nation precedes its socio-economic realization ... Besides the many ways in which the workers in the struggle, construct the new nation, and it has to be emphasised that this is the ground on which everything else rests, without which all other efforts by individuals and organisations would be mere voluntarism.¹⁵⁰

From the above analysis by Alexander, one can deduce that the workers' contribution to the liberation struggle under the banner of BC and AZAPO, became important. Clearly, within the worker's structures, all existing ethnic identities and loyalties had to be subsumed under a larger workers' consciousness without destroying the rich cultural diversity and backgrounds of these black workers. Equally, here, the researcher argued that all efforts had to be made to prevent this workers' consciousness from being transformed into an exclusivist or sectional-communal consciousness that could potentially lead to the undermining of a free, exploitation and oppressive SA.

Buti Tlhagale's article entitled, *Towards a Black Theology of Labour*, explains that, according to biblical theology, work is supposed to help people develop themselves and contribute to the constant re-creation and growth of society. He further stated that work should stimulate inventiveness and self-actualisation, while providing a source of reasonable physical, economic and social support. However, in SA, Tlhagale argues, work for the Black workers was used to subjugate and enslave them.¹⁵¹ Providing an in-depth analysis of the above, he alludes that in the SA context, the question of work/labour becomes the fundamental category of human existence.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 11-12. For more information on the same argument and line of thinking, see B. Turok, 'Black Consciousness is not False Consciousness', in B. Turok, 'Strategic problems in South Africa's liberation struggle: A Critical Analysis', *Azania Frontline*, 3, August 1985, pp. 8-9; N. Alexander, 'Race, Ethnicity and Nationalism in Social Science in Southern Africa', *Paper presented at the 15th Annual Congress of the Association for Sociology in South Africa*, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, 3 July 1984; B. Molapo, 'On the national question', *The African Communist*, 66(3), 1976, pp. 82-93; K. Mthembu, 'One Azania, One Nation', *Pace*, September 1982, pp. 162-163.

¹⁵¹ B. Tlhagale, 'Towards a Black Theology of labour', in C. Villa-Vicencio and J.W. De Gruchy (eds.), *Resistance and Hope* (Cape Town: David Philip, 1985), pp. 126-134.

Therefore, it is through labour that human beings are transformed, and labour should be viewed as a developmental process, leading to collective growth and provision of human dignity.

Through these arguments, Tlhagale situates the BC's fundamental points, highlighting that Black workers should not be used as objects and faceless wheels of the productive machinery to produce wealth to the sole benefit of ruling capitalist Whites. Although AZAPO managed to mobilise some workers, this worker support, mainly through the National Council of Trade Unions, was considered less to what the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) was giving to the Charterist organisations. It was also interesting to note that during its annual conference in December 1990, AZAPO continued to show no signs of deviating from its existing policy. As it is shown in the subsequent chapters of this study, it was skeptical about being 'another White infiltrated' organisation.

3.3.2 The BC and AZAPO's interpretation of religion as a liberation philosophy

The extra-parliamentary politics and exploitation of the Black people in the 1960s, opened an avenue for the involvement of religion in the country's liberation struggle. Black Theology, which was first popularised by the University Christian Movement (UCM), became an ideal vehicle for propagating ideas about liberation. The most notable leaders of the time were Manas Buthelezi, Desmond Tutu, Simon Gqubule and many others.¹⁵² Karla Poewe writes that '... all African or Black South African theologies are liberation theologies'. Like many other theologians writing about the liberation struggle from the theological point of view, the above statement by Poewe looks at theology as a vehicle that seeks to interpret the Christian faith from the perspective of the poor and the oppressed.¹⁵³ Here Poewe also provides two important categories of Black Theology or what he refers to as Liberation Theology. The first is the one which grew out of Biko's BCM and initially gave voice to black suffering in the 1960s and the 1970s. The second is Contextual Theology developed by White South African priest, Albert Nolan, through his teachings that Christianity could be best understood from the perspective of any 'victim society'.¹⁵⁴

¹⁵² UNISA, Archival and Special Collections, *State v/s S. Cooper and others*, Case No. 18/175, 254, vol. 96, p. 5557.

¹⁵³ K. Poewe, 'Theologies of Black South Africans and the rhetoric of peace versus violence', *Canadian Journal of African Studies*, 27(1), 1993, p. 43.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.* See also G.J. Rossouw, 'Essentials of apartheid', in W.J. Hofmyer, C.J.S. Lombaard, and P.J. Maritz, *Perspectives on Christianity*, Series 5, vol.1 (Pretoria: University of Pretoria Printers, 2001), p. 97.

In justifying the above, Bobby Nel explains:

Since the early sixties, there has been an increasing strong revival in African Theology. One could even speak of African Theology as a precursor to Black Theology. African Theology was also proof that the inhabitants of Africa no longer regarded the theology of the West as the only valid form of Christian Theology and wished to break away from the dominant character of the Western culture that they identified with Christianity.¹⁵⁵

Furthermore, Nel states that opposition to interpreting the Bible from a White perspective, was an ancient phenomenon and appealed to supporting break-aways from a White-dominated theological world.¹⁵⁶ He argues that on a theoretical and theological level, there is a struggle against the dominance of a westernized interpretation of God and the Bible. The question is not only where the church stands, but also where God stands in the fight against domination and for liberation. This question closely relates to how the Bible should be read and understood.¹⁵⁷ Gerald West's work on liberation theology, examined the shape and contributions of three significant liberation theologies in SA over three decades, namely, Black Theology, Contextual Theology, and African Women's Theology. He elaborated:

While the term 'liberation' was still of immense rhetorical importance to us, given its rich heritage, the terrain from within which the term had arisen was shifting. There was not the same hope that the imagined socialist forms of political liberation would materialise... So, we had to re-imagine what 'liberation' might look like, both in terms of what liberation was 'from' and what liberation was 'to'. One way of talking about 'liberation', which began to emerge during this time, was to speak of 'the God of life' and 'idols of death'. What liberation theology was about, we said, was taking sides with the God of life against the forces of death.¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁵ B. Nel, 'The story of Black Theology of liberation in South Africa', in I. Liebenberg, F. Lortan, B. Nel, and G. van der Westhuizen (eds.), *The Long March: The story of the struggle for liberation in South Africa* (Pretoria: HAUM, 1994), p. 140.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 138.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.* See also J. Kunnie, 'Christianity, Black Theology and liberating faith', in I.J. Mosala and B. Tlhagale (eds.), *The unquestionable right to be free: Essays in Black Theology* (Johannesburg: Skotaville, 1986), pp. 153-168; S. Maimane, 'Black Theology and the quest for a God of liberation', in S.G. Devaney (ed.), *Theology at the end of modernity: Essays in honour of Gordon D. Kaufman* (Philadelphia: Trinity, 1991a), pp. 141-159.

¹⁵⁸ G. West, 'The legacy of liberation theologies in South Africa, with an emphasis on biblical hermeneutics', *Studia Historiae Ecclesiasticae*, 36, July 2010, p. 157.

According to West, many attempts were made by Black theologians to attend to the origins of Black Theology and how it influenced the country's liberation struggle under BC and later AZAPO. He noted the following chronological periodisation, as identified by Tinyiko Maluleke. The first phase began with the formation of the Black Theology Project by the UCM in 1970. Here blackness was acknowledged to be a state of mind and argued that all Black people should use the Bible and Christianity for liberation. The second started in 1981, with the establishment of the Institute for Contextual Theology. In the second phase, objective blackness was no longer sufficient. Not all Black people are the focus of Black Theology. He based his arguments on the assumption that 'not all theology done by Black people is Black Theology and not all the Bible (Christianity) is liberating'. He further made a distinction that, while in the first phase Black Theology was closely linked to the BC philosophy, in phase two Black Theology recognised a wider ideological ferment with the inclusion of Marxist historical materialism in the hermeneutic of Black Theology.¹⁵⁹

What was interesting about West's analysis, was the aspect of African women in theology, which many Black theologians fail to elevate. Only few scholars concentrated on this kind of theology.¹⁶⁰ This was also a shortfall within the history of AZAPO, regionally and nationally. Although there were women within the structures of AZAPO, generally their voices were lacking. One may argue that this was because of the patriarchal and 'genderised' history of SA, overtime. According to Philippe Denis, the BC had its strong component of Black Theology, which exposed its diverse phenomenon, ranging from SASO and other student groups to the Black Community Programmes and the umbrella organisation, the BPC. He confessed that the term 'Black Consciousness' entered SASO's discourse during 1970, but it only received a definition the following year at the General Students Council, held in Wentworth in July 1971. In this section of the chapter, the researcher tried to show how Black Theology in the AZAPO structures manifested itself through the BC principles. It should be noted that as early as 1967, eight seminaries were listed in the directory of

¹⁵⁹ T.S. Maluleke, 'Black Theology as a public discourse', in J.R. Cochrane (ed.), *Constructing a language of religion in public life: Multi-Event*, 1999 *Academic Workshop Papers* (Cape Town: University of Cape Town, 1998b), p. 61. See also T.S. Maluleke, 'Black and African Theologies in the New World Order: A time to drink from our own wells', *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa*, 96, 1996, pp. 3-19.

¹⁶⁰ R. Jordaan, 'The emergence of Black Feminist Theology in South Africa', in D. Ackerman, J.A. Draper and E. Mashinini (eds.), *Women hold up half the sky: Women in the church in Southern Africa* (Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publisher, 1991), pp. 122-128; R. Jordaan, 'The emergence of Black Feminist Theology in South Africa', *Journal of Black Theology in South Africa*, 1, 1987, pp. 42-46; B. Mncube, 'Biblical problems and the struggle of women', *Paper presented at Women's struggle in South Africa: Feminist Theology Conference*, Hammanskraal, 1984.

the UCM, which was a national multi-racial Christian student organisation, established in July 1967. As alluded to by Denis, the above was supported by the mainline churches. This happened shortly before the secession of a group of Black students, who constituted SASO in late 1968.¹⁶¹

Zaba Gregory Mbanjwa of the Saint Joseph's Institute observed that Black Theology was instrumental in giving the churches in SA an agenda to fight for justice and the recognition of the Black person as a fully-fledged human being. The Black Theology, Mbanjwa contends, presented its objectives as that of portraying God to the suffering and oppressed Blacks. First, the message from the Black theologians was to indicate that God does not merely liberate people from suffering but liberates them so that they should live in a suitable situation. Should this be achieved, then these theologians could proclaim justice. Second, Black Theology envisaged to liberate both the Black oppressed and the White oppressor from the grip of oppression, fear and insecurity. Thus, this is the meaning of being a theology of liberation. For social and political liberation, God is the liberator.¹⁶²

Tlhagane, a Black theologian who propagated for Black Theology to be embedded within the founding principles of AZAPO, was instrumental and involved in the founding of the organisation in 1978. His ministry during the late 1970s, during the foundation of AZAPO, was based on seminary teaching, parish ministry in Soweto and later held an important position, that of being Secretary General for the Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference. He also served as the Archbishop of Bloemfontein from 1999 to 2003. His earlier writings, which also influenced AZAPO, focused on Black Theology, labour, and enculturation issues.

In his seminal work entitled, *The Use of the Bible in Black Theology*, Itumeleng Mosala (erstwhile President of AZAPO) became the first Black theologian to question in print what he referred to as

¹⁶¹ P. Denis, 'Seminary training and black consciousness in South Africa in the early 1970s' (unpublished). See also other scholarly works by P. Denis, 'Clergy Training', in J. Brain and P. Denis (eds.), *The Catholic Church in Contemporary Southern Africa* (Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publication, 1992), pp. 124-150; R.T. Cameron, 'Some political, ecumenical and theological aspects of the history of the Federal Theological Seminary, 1963-1975', *MA Dissertation*, University of Cape Town, Cape Town, 1989; D. Magaziner, 'Christ in context: Developing a political faith in apartheid South Africa', *Radical History Review*, 99, 2007, pp. 80-106; L. Hadfield, 'Christian Action and Black Consciousness Community Programmes in South Africa', *Journal for the Study of Religion, Public Faith and the Politics of Faith*, 23(1/2), 2010; L. Hadfield, 'Kwakungekhomkhethe – There was no discrimination: Oral history and Black Consciousness Community Work in the King William's Town Area', *Paper presented at the 5th Oral History Association of South Africa Conference*, East London, 7-9 October 2008.

¹⁶² Z.G. Mbanjwa, 'Struggle for justice and fullness of life: Catholic Social Teaching in Genesis and Development of South African Black Theology (With specific reference to Buti Tlhagane and Mandlenkosi Zwane), (unpublished), pp. 1-4.

‘the ambiguous ideological nature of Bible’.¹⁶³ According to him, most of the chapters in the Bible did not really offer any starting point for a theology of liberation, which many Black theologians in SA longed for. To justify the above observation, he quoted the book of Micah which he said: ‘is silent about the ideological struggle waged by the oppressed and exploited class of monarchic Israel’.¹⁶⁴ Instead of the Bible as the starting point for Black theology, Mosala suggested that those committed to the struggles of the Black oppressed and exploited people, should not ignore the importance and the role of history, culture, and ideologies of the Black people.¹⁶⁵

As mentioned above, liberation theologians played an integral role in the struggle for liberation from the BC and AZAPO’s perspectives. Following the old biblical adage, ‘... the salt of the earth’, Ramathate T. Dolamo contends that when the BC philosophy was first initiated and conceptualized, it was not supposed to have been encapsulated in an institution or single organisation. He argues that this should have been meant for what he referred to as ‘a people’s philosophy for liberation’.¹⁶⁶ BC adherents within the movement and AZAPO as an organisation, played a significant role in using religion, particularly leaning to Black Theology, as a mobilization tool to garner support. Emphasizing the above, Dolamo explained that several workshops would be conducted by university students and theology seminarians during school holidays across the country. University students, who were expelled, because of their political activism, were employed as teachers at high schools and they used the opportunity to teach BC and at the same time, these teachers propagated the ideas of liberation theology, whenever an opportunity arose.¹⁶⁷

One important academic study on Christianity and liberation was conducted as a PhD by Johannes Nicolaas Jacobus Kritzinger. It makes a huge contribution and appeals to the liberation activists on the significance of Christianity on liberation. However, this depends on how one looks at the impact of Christianity in this regard. In his summary of the thesis, Kritzinger noted:

¹⁶³ I.J. Mosala, ‘The use of the Bible in Black Theology’, in I.J. Mosala and B. Tlhagale (eds.), *The unquestionable right to be free: Essays in Black Theology* (Johannesburg: Skotaville, 1986c), pp. 175-199.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁵ I.J. Mosala, *Biblical hermeneutics and Black Theology in South Africa* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989), p. 197. For more information on this, see also I.J. Mosala, *Biblical Hermeneutics and Black Theology in South Africa, PhD Thesis*, University of Cape Town: Cape Town, 1987.

¹⁶⁶ R.T. Dolamo, ‘The legacy of Black Consciousness: Its continued relevance for democratic South Africa and its significance for theological education’, *HTS Teologie Studies/Theological Studies*, 73(3), 2017, p. 5.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

This thesis proposes that Christian mission in South Africa should be understood in terms of liberation. To achieve this aim, the author listens attentively to Black Theology, and responds from a position of solidarity to the double challenge, which it poses: a negation of traditional mission and an affirmation of liberating mission. Since Black theologians' grapple with the concrete implications of their blackness, a White theologian needs to make a consciously white response, in order to do justice to it.¹⁶⁸

3.4 How the 'arts and culture' assisted crafting AZAPO's identity

In this section of the chapter, it is vital to acknowledge the significance of arts and culture in the crafting of AZAPO's identity, regarding endorsement of its philosophy. Here, the researcher understands that the BC philosophy that was invented by the youth, had to be inculcated within the values of education, arts and culture. Thus, conscientisation¹⁶⁹ workshops, held during school holidays, were aimed at empowering young people to know their history and their purpose in life, as well as shaping their own destiny. As noted by Themba Sono, this conscientisation was fundamental to BC programmes. Through cultural activities, such as drama, music and youth activities, BC philosophy was transmitted.¹⁷⁰

The leaders of BC and AZAPO were educated people, who were intellectuals. The researcher argued here that long before the question of a decolonial curricular could be fashionable in SA, these leaders propagated decolonised education from primary to tertiary level. The leaders argued for these curricula to represent the aspirations of the Blacks in general and Africans in particular; it should be crafted by Blacks themselves and discard whatever was written about them by others. According to Maphele Ramphele, Chris McDowell and Jacklyn, the organisation realized the truth of revamping the curricula in the 1970s, when journals, such as Black Review and Black Viewpoint were launched.¹⁷¹ It is also important to note that after the decolonisation process in

¹⁶⁸ J.N.J. Kritzing, 'Black Theology – Challenge to Mission', *PhD Thesis*, University of South Africa, Pretoria, 1988), p. ii.

¹⁶⁹ This term was popularised by the Brazilian educator Paulo Freire. It was frequently used by BC proponents. The adult literacy projects of both the University Christian Movement and the BCP followed Freire's basic approach. The term implied that the level of consciousness of the people must be raised, so that they become aware of the true situation in and around them.

¹⁷⁰ T. Sono, *Reflections on the origins of black consciousness in South Africa* (HSRC: Pretoria, 1993), p. 72.

¹⁷¹ M. Ramphele, C. McDowell and J. Cock, *Restoring the Land: Environment and Change in Post-Apartheid South Africa* (London, 1991), p. 162.

Africa began, people delved into their histories to prove that African religion, philosophy and culture, in general, were far superior to any civilisation in the world.

On many occasions, leaders of BC argued that liberation could not happen while Black people were not conscious of their political situation in SA. Leaders stressed that Black people should avoid the temptations of seeing themselves as ‘non-whites’, or rather wishing to be ‘White’, but at the same time being unable to be White. Through arts and culture, emphasis was for Black people to feel pride in their blackness. To achieve this, along with BC, came a great deal of the movement’s cultural expression, namely, music, theatre, stories and poetry. With the above, the emphasis was on the question of black pride, which always focused on the racism, oppression, and unequal power relations in SA. The above was confirmed by Mzamane, Maaba and Biko, when stating that ‘the BCM was active in most spheres but in none more vigorously or more successfully than in the arts and culture... Taking its cue from Amilcar Cabral and Frantz Fanon, BC recognised the essentially political importance of the cultural struggle’.¹⁷²

One of the famous BC’s poets was Mongane Wally Serote. He became involved in the BCM after finishing high school in Soweto. His presence there linked him to a group, known as the ‘township’ or ‘Soweto’ poets and advanced the BC’s aspirations of mobilising the Black masses with ‘black pride’. In June 1969 he was arrested by the apartheid regime under the Terrorism Act and spent nine months in solitary confinement, before being released without charge. His poems often express themes of political activism and Black identity and contained images of revolt and resistance.

The novel work to have been published to date, highlighting the importance of the arts through BC philosophy, was by Shannen Hill. Her book entitled; *Biko’s Ghost* was a research project she undertook in SA over a period of three years. During this period, she embarked on the fieldwork and collected numerous evidence to justify the importance and influence, specifically of arts in laying the foundation for the formation of AZAPO, through the BC ideology. The first few

¹⁷² M.V. Mzamane, B.B. Maaba and N. Biko, ‘The Black Consciousness Movement in South Africa, 1970-1980’, in South African Democracy Education Trust (ed.), *The Road to Democracy in South Africa*, vol. 2, (1970-1980), (Pretoria: UNISA Press, 2006), p. 141. See also M.V. Mzamane, ‘Early Black Consciousness Publications’, in L. Switzer and M. Adhikari (eds.), *South Africa’s Resistance Press: Alternative Voices in the last generation under apartheid* (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 2000); University of South Africa (UNISA), Archival and Special Collections, Accession 127: SASO on the attack: An introduction to the South African Students Organisation, SASO Historical Background, p. 19; UNISA, Archival and Special Collections, Accession 127: SASO Newsletter, November/December: Arts and Letters: Reviews, ‘Yakhal’inkomo: Poems by Wally Serote’, p. 14.

chapters of the book trace the history of BCM before its banning by the apartheid regime. The period covered between 1968 to 1977. The remaining six chapters demonstrate, through graphic evidence, the legacy of BC and its influence through the 1980s up to the post-1994 era.

Writing about the significance of this book to the liberation struggle historiography, Ian Macqueen stated: ‘In over 300 pages, which includes both black and white and colour images, Hill demonstrates the continued influence of Black Consciousness and the deployment (and appropriation) of Black Consciousness-inspired imagery. Chief among these icons was the raised, clenched black fist, and the image of black hands breaking chains’.¹⁷³ With this seminal work, Hill succeeded in broadening the readers’ understanding to the complexities, which surrounded the formation of AZAPO and the influences thereof. Themes with the undertones of challenging the apartheid regime, as unpacked by BC, inclined artists, such as Dikobe Martins, Ezrom Legae, Gerard Sekoto, Motlhabane Mashiangwako, Lefifi Tladi, David Koloane, Durant Sihlali, Sam Nhlengethwa, Willie Bester, and Donovan Ward, are highlighted.¹⁷⁴

Tladi (nicknamed Jomo after Kenya’s independence hero Jomo Kenyatta) was one of the founder members of the band Dashiki. Through this band, he took the artistic resistance against the apartheid regime to greater heights. Despite being vocal against the atrocities inflicted by the regime to Africans through poetry, the formation of Dashiki managed to fuse music and politically charged poetry. On fusing these two, Tladi explained: ‘... the political is not always pleasurable, but the pleasurable, within the vernacular is always potentially political’. In many of his stage performances, Tladi would always appear carrying one of his drums and having a clenched fist shot up in the Black Power salute. The formation of Dakishi brought the likes of Tladi into serious contact with the BCM.

As part of culture and resistance, political poems also played a significant role. In his PhD study, Kritzinger uses what he refers to as black poetry and black drama to articulate the mobilizing approach of the BCM. Some of the poems he uses, are those by James Matthews:

Can the White man speak for me?

Can he feel my pain when his laws

¹⁷³ I. Macqueen, *New perspectives on the history of Black Consciousness in South Africa* (unpublished).

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

tear wife and child from my side and
I am forced to work a thousand miles away?
Does he know my anguish as I walk his streets
at night with my hands fearfully clasping my pass?
Is he with me in the loneliness of my bed in the
bachelor barracks with my longing driving me
to mount my brother? Will he soothe the despair
as I am driven insane by scraps of paper permitting
me to live? Can the White man speak for me?

Chabani Manganyi alluded to the fact that in most cases, 'the White body has been projected as the standard, the norm of beauty and accomplishment, whereas the Black body has been projected as bad, by nature inferior, incompetent and unwholesome'.¹⁷⁵ The above analysis by Manganyi is further elucidated in another poem by Matthews:

White syphilization taints Blacks, makes them
carbon copies imitating White man's acts, turning
aside from ways of Blacks the women face smeared
skin bleached hair straightened. White man's fashion dolls,
Black man dressed in tailored suits, silk shirts, Italian
shoes, dreaming dreams of Houghton, swimming pools!
Wake-up Black fools.¹⁷⁶

Another poem, which was embraced by the BC and appealed to 'Black pride' was penned by Ben Langa in 1973. It stated:

I want freedom, yes freedom from starvation,
Exploitation, dehumanization.
I want a culture that says I am human and alive.

¹⁷⁵ N.C. Manganyi, *Being-Black-in-the-world* (Ravan Press: Johannesburg, SPRO-CAS, 1973), p. 29.

¹⁷⁶ J. Matthews (ed.), *Black Voices Shout! An Anthology of Poetry* (Athlone: Blac Publishing House, 1974), p. 29.

I want liberation! I shall give my life to the people!

I am longing and any life for a revolution,

liberation for freedom.¹⁷⁷

For both BC and AZAPO, the clinched fist became the ‘trademark’ and expressed the determination of Black people to affirm themselves as human beings against the prevalent White domination. This, to a certain extent, would assist in mobilising their collective power to overcome this racial domination. To BC and AZAPO members, this clenched fist was a salute to embrace Black dignity and humanity. At no stage was this viewed by members of these organisations as a sign to threaten the Whites. It was unfortunate that some White critics interpreted this as a sign of ‘arrogance’, exhibited by Blacks. On the contrary, for Blacks this sign portrayed self-reliance.

This self-reliance was the bedrock upon which psychological liberation was founded. It carried with it a painful transition from being a victim, to being a rebel of understanding one’s history.¹⁷⁸ The above need for psychological liberation was further elaborated by Allan Boesak, when stating: ‘Getting rid of an implanted slave mentality is central to the philosophy of Black Consciousness. The affirmation of one’s personhood is a powerful act that constitutes a farewell to innocence. Blacks should realise that their situation was not caused by a cosmetic inevitability, but by powers beyond their control’.¹⁷⁹

The Black Power Movement in America was the first group to adopt the clinched fist as a revolutionary salutation. Additionally, organisations, like BC and AZAPO were impacted by this honour. Besides the clinched fist salutation, another noticeable influence is the use of the term ‘Black’. Leaders in BC, for instance, favoured the name Black Consciousness over Black Power. The latter was perceived as a philosophy that enabled the Black American minority to organise into a pressure group and negotiate full inclusion in the pre-existing American ‘open society’, which was founded on a non-discriminatory constitution and, as M. Motlhabi contends, continued to be a society within a White majority.¹⁸⁰

¹⁷⁷ B.J. Langa, ‘The creative arts – A statement for creativity and Black development’, in B.J. Langa (ed.), *Creativity and Black development* (Durban: SASO Publications, 1973).

¹⁷⁸ N.C. Manganyi, *Looking through the keyhole: Dissenting essays on the Black experience* (Ravan Press: Johannesburg, 1981), p. 170.

¹⁷⁹ A.A. Boesak, *Black Theology, Black Power* (Cape Town: Mowbrays, 1978), p. 6.

¹⁸⁰ M. Motlhabi, *The theory and practice of Black resistance to apartheid: A social-ethical analysis* (Johannesburg: Skotaville, 1984).

When the Black Power Movement arose in America in the mid-1960s, it immediately made an impact on the powerless and leaderless Black communities in SA, because of the void created by the apartheid regime's repressive measures. It was especially Black students, who eagerly read and then started propagating the bold ideas of people, such as Stokely Carmichael, Eldridge Cleaver, Malcolm X and others. These were significant personal contacts between Black Power activists in America and BC activists in SA. According to Kritzing, the South African regime often refused the American speakers' visa requests, even though the organisations, like BC frequently asked them to speak at their conferences. Following that, the speakers' papers were read aloud to the conference and included in the proceedings as though they had been there. This was the case, for instance, with James Cone, who received invitations to the Black Renaissance Convention in 1974 and the Black Theology Seminar in 1971.¹⁸¹

3.5 Written texts influenced BC and AZAPO leaders

The writings of several black American activists, as well as Leopold Senghor, Sekou Toure, Airne Caesare, Julius Nyerere, Frantz Fanon and later Achille Mbembe, have served as sources of inspiration and material for the concept of BC in the past and the current dispensation. BC is made up of three interconnected elements: unity, self-reliance and emancipation. Organising one's life and determining one's own fate was a fundamental conviction of the leaders of BC. The phrase 'Blackman, you are on your own' encapsulates this. Additionally, Black people were urged not to interact with institutions, established by the dictatorship, since it was thought that doing so would only serve to imprison them, rather than free them. It was thought that all White people, including those who claimed radicalism, were benefactors of the White-controlled status quo and that their main contribution to movements headed by Black people was to quieten the masses and rein in their leaders. As a result, contact with White people was discouraged.¹⁸²

Achille Mbembe captures the differences between White and Black as follows: 'The two defensive logics of Black victimhood and White denialism collude and collide, often in unexpected ways. Together they gradually foster a culture of mutual resentment, which, in turn, isolates freedom

¹⁸¹ Kritzing, p. 28.

¹⁸² P.B. Singh, 'The rise of Black Consciousness in South Africa: A presentation of the parameters of the movement and an empirical demonstration of political and cultural attitudes among non-university Indian students', *Post-Graduate Diploma in the Applied Social Sciences*, University of Natal, Durban, 1980, p. 3.

from responsibility and seriously undermines the prospects of a truly non-racial future'.¹⁸³ In another publication, Mbembe argued that Black people had been perceived as incapable of conceiving an 'independent collective identity' and had been classified as simply limited to seeing themselves through the eyes of their oppressors.¹⁸⁴ As quoted by Jinadu, Frantz Fanon's publication showed commitment to the purification of the Black man, set forth that 'man is what brings society into being; that progress is in the hands of those who are willing to get rid of the worm-eaten roots of the structure'.¹⁸⁵ By structure, Fanon was referring to the structure of colonisation and the oppression of Black people by Whites.

In another expression, Robert Fatton argues that it would be erroneous to reduce the BC to a mere 'cultural renaissance'. He further asserts that BC recognised that White people could not, nor did they experience 'firsthand the predicament of being Black'. The rejection of collaboration with Whites was not a matter of pigmentation, but above all it was due to their exclusive and abusive bourgeois privileges'. Therefore, 'whites could not join in the struggle of the Black masses'. From this premise, BC became conscious of the impact of material conditions of existence. Thus, Blackness went further than skin colour; its determinants included the lived daily experience of oppression and exploitation of the masses, be it peasants or urban workers.¹⁸⁶

The works written by many of these African leaders, as well as scholars from the continent became influential in shaping the ideological thinking of BC and AZAPO leaders. This also became worse when the organisations were banned, because of the material used to be smuggled within and outside the country. As it is shown in the next two chapters of this study, taking from the BC's philosophy, AZAPO in the Province continued with the roadmap of the creation of an 'open society' where skin colour had no part, but at the same time rejected the involvement and contact with Whites, as the latter were beneficiaries of the apartheid regime.

¹⁸³ A. Mbembe, 'Passages to Freedom: The politics of racial reconciliation in South Africa', *Public Culture*, 20(1), 2008, pp. 5-7.

¹⁸⁴ A. Mbembe, 'Biko's Testament of Hope', in C. van Wyk (ed.), *We write what we like: Celebrating Steve Biko* (Johannesburg: Wits University Press, 2007), p. 135.

¹⁸⁵ L.A. Jinadu, *Fanon: In search of the African Revolution* (London: Sydney and Henley, 1986), p. 28.

¹⁸⁶ R. Fatton, *Black Consciousness in South Africa: The dialectics of ideological resistance to white supremacy* (Albany/New York: State University of New York Press, 1986), p. 58.

3.6. Conclusion

This chapter painted a picture of the ideological underpinnings of BC and AZAPO and how these organisations used that to advance the struggle for liberation in SA. Furthermore, it highlights the how conscientisation of the Black masses was fostered through many fronts, including the politicisation of the workers; the role played by the Black Theologians under the banner of Liberation Theology; the role of the arts and mobilising the masses; and the role of reading material and published by those who advocated for liberation of the Black people on the African continent and elsewhere in the world. These intervention aspects in promoting the ideals of BC should be understood in the broader sense of liberation in SA.

CHAPTER FOUR :

AZANIAN PEOPLE'S ORGANIZATION (AZAPO) IN THE FREE STATE AND BLOEMFONTEIN, MANGAUNG

4.1 Introduction

The chapter notes that due to the challenges experienced by all other organisations, including AZAPO, to have formidable structures of the organisation in the Free State, was not an easy task. As mentioned in the introduction of this study, although the Free State's geographical position was destined to be the centre of Black political activism, its centrality and being mainly a semi-rural province, attracted a lot of attention from the apartheid security forces. Thus, political mobilisation for any organisation, particularly in the late 1970s and at the end of the 1980s, invited surveillance from the Special Branch (SB) Units of the police. However, as it is shown in the chapter, some small and big towns of the province had AZAPO branches, despite repression from the apartheid regime. When writing this chapter, two important books came to mind, namely, those by Ineke van Kessel and by Jeremy Seekings. Both books deal with the United Democratic Front (UDF) and some elements refer, although limitedly, to AZAPO.

Using the above sources as points of reference, the chapter looks at the role of students, the youth and individuals, in the formation of AZAPO branches in the Free State with emphasis on Mangaung. Before that, operations of the organisation's branches in other towns, such as Kroonstad, Hennenman, Welkom, Sasolburg, Bethlehem and Qwaqwa are also investigated. The development of AZAPO and its mobilisation in the area under scrutiny appeared to be slower as compared to other places around the country. The study elaborated on the reasons for this slowness. This chapter embarks on a historical exploration of AZAPO's political activists, which have burgeoned in response to the social, cultural and political constraints, suffered by Black people during this period. The challenges experienced by the political activists, with reference to being undermined by the underground and aboveground congress-aligned movements and the repression from the apartheid regime, are discussed. This debate on the contestation for political space is important to understand AZAPO's political activities in Mangaung during the period under discussion.

Of significance with this chapter is the use of life-history interviews with a select group of those who played a role within BC and AZAPO political circles. These interviewees provide descriptions of events and processes on political key issues in their own words. The information provided here through the life-histories, adds to the existing records of the history of the struggle and gives a full portrait of the role these unsung heroes and heroines played within AZAPO. This chapter elevates another important issue into the political discourse of AZAPO, namely, the innate or inherent weaknesses of the movement in Mangaung. Here it is argued that, besides the repression by the apartheid regime on members of AZAPO and other political formations at the time, there were growing frustrations and dissatisfactions from the movements' members in the area. This emanated from the lengthy incarceration period endured by the political activists, as well as dealing with the issues of tactics and strategies from space and time, pertaining to internal contradictions.

Another challenge was the recruitment of its members and leadership into the congress-aligned organisations. Although there was no fierce 'open' confrontation with such organisations, at the later stages of AZAPO's activism in the area, most of its members defected to the congress-aligned organisations. To some, the activists' involvement in the liberation struggle brought them significant hardship, pain and stigmatisation from those who never supported the liberation agenda. Others felt empowered, enlightened, and became more resilient, because of their past activism, but at the same time lamented about the lack of wider change in the country, and saddened by the opportunities they missed, because they dedicated their lives into the liberation struggle.

In this chapter one notes that the recollection from the interviewees were marked by the above-mentioned contradictions, namely, while they were incredibly proud of their contributions to the liberation struggle, some were still traumatized about their experiences. This summary of the chapter gestures towards the numerous similarities that are evident across different structures of AZAPO and were exposed in the Free State and how this informed the organisation's broader national liberation agenda. The approach adopted in this chapter shows that the BC and SASO evolved over time, leading to the formation of AZAPO in the late 1970s. With reference to the Free State, the post-1976 era group is interrogated and how the youth and student organisations in the Free State towns assisted in the fast-tracking of the formation of organisations, such as AZAPO. Besides the concentration of this chapter on the youth and student organisations and the

influences thereof, it also reveals how ‘uncelebrated individuals’ in the province sacrificed their youthful years for the liberation of this country.

The chapter argues that democratic political changes, leading to the formation of AZAPO branches in the Free State, entailed an overall change in the visual, psychological and material makeup of the inhabitants of the provinces and takes into consideration those influences that also came up from outside the province. Here, the researcher delved into the role played by students’ activists who came from the progressive institutions of higher learning outside the province. How their political consciousness was transmitted to the high school pupils in the provinces’ towns, is discussed. The chapter contends that this political influence had undertones of the socio-historical/political sense, which was coupled with massive categorization with effects on people’s psychology, culture, socio-economic opportunities, life chances and civil rights.

4.2 BC-aligned activities and AZAPO in the Free State towns and ‘dorpiess’

Here, the researcher disputes a view that AZAPO could not offer a genuinely novel approach to counter the racist and racially obsessed apartheid state, for it was itself radically separatist. Departing from understanding the organisation from the national sphere, it is important to scrutinize its branch formations at the regional levels. This approach argues that the research assists in understanding the political dynamics of the Free State and how the political mobilisation of AZAPO unfolded. Undertaking this will be aligned with the importance to understand the politics of the different towns in the province.

As mentioned in chapter one of this study, the question of AZAPO’s formation in the Free State was faced with challenges, the same as elsewhere in the country. However, some of the province’s challenges were unique. To justify the above, in their chapter on the Free State, published under the auspices of the South African Democracy Education Trust (SADET), Chitja Twala and Jeremy Seekings made the following observation, regarding the politicization of the masses in the Free State towns and ‘dorpiess’ during the late 1970s and the entire decade of the 1980s:

...This chapter examines the construction and activities of networks of activists in the Free State in the 1980s. Overall, political struggles in the Free State did not compare with those in many other parts of the country. There was no effective organisation at the regional level until 1990, and no regional UDF structure was ever formally launched. But there were

protests: initially in the townships of Tumahole, Thabong (Welkom) and Mangaung (Bloemfontein); then spreading across the north-west corner of the Free State and out from Bloemfontein; then spreading across much of the northern Free State to Bethlehem and later Harrismith in the eastern part of the region; and finally, reaching even into some of the small towns of the southern Free State.¹⁸⁷

With little reference to AZAPO, the work by Twala and Seekings indicated the challenges that the province faced in terms of political mobilisation. The work explores the ways political networks contributed to the unfolding protests in the diverse towns of the Free State. The two authors further allude that the character of political networks and thus the pattern of political protest in the Free State reflected aspects of the province's social and political landscape. First, and most importantly, its economic geography and road network undermine the coherence of the Free State as a region: The north-western corner of the Free State is linked to Johannesburg up the N1 highway, and the eastern Free State is linked to Johannesburg (and KwaZulu-Natal) up and down the N3 highway, more closely than they are linked to the provincial capital, Bloemfontein. Both population and industry are concentrated in the north-west corner, which includes the goldfields around Welkom, as well as Sasolburg, Parys and Kroonstad. Indeed, Sasolburg is an integral part of the Vaal Triangle, and all the townships of the northern Free State were administered from 1979, together with those of the Vaal Triangle by the Orange Vaal Administration Board (later renamed Development Board), with its head office in Vanderbijlpark, and separate from those in the southern Free State that fell under the Southern Free State Administration/Development Board, based in Bloemfontein.¹⁸⁸

Apart from Bloemfontein, which served as both an administrative and commercial hub, the towns in the east, centre, and south of the Free State were primarily agricultural and had a largely agrarian economy. There were little opportunities for trade union organisation outside of the northwest. This combination of administrative boundaries, transportation routes, and economic disparities had a long-lasting impact on regional politics, preventing the creation of a single coordinating network and strengthening the idea that the area was made up of at least two separate organisations.¹⁸⁹

¹⁸⁷ C. Twala, and J. Seekings, 'Activist networks and political protest in the Free State, 1983-1990', in South African Democracy Education Trust (ed.), *The Road to Democracy in South Africa*, vol. 4, Part 1, (1980-1990), (Pretoria: UNISA Press, 2010), pp. 766-767.

¹⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 767

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 767-768.

In the 1980s, most townships in the Free State were tiny, and the area lacked universities that could foster organised protests in other places. Only four major townships existed, namely, Mangaung (Bloemfontein), Seeisoville (Kroonstad), Thabong (Welkom) and Bohlokong (Bethlehem), with an official population of over 20 000. There were also many tiny villages without even a secondary school, and not all of them offered education up to Grade 12 (Matriculation). In the 1980s, the area lacked a robust political organisation or protest legacy that individuals could latch onto, despite the ANC being established in Bloemfontein. Furthermore, the Free State has a dearth of radical and Coloured activists, who could offer township activists' various forms of resistance, in addition to material and other support to township activists; people classified as Indian were prohibited from living in the province, so there was no equivalent to the Natal and Transvaal Indian Congresses.¹⁹⁰

Twala and Seekings imply that while some of the complaints faced by residents in Free State townships were like those of their counterparts in townships located in large urban regions, they were not identical. Like many other parts of South Africa, the swift growth of secondary education did not equate to high-quality instruction. The confluence of this low-quality education with quick development, created an ideal environment for student activism. Township living conditions were bad. Just 11 of the roughly 80 townships in the Free State had more than 10% of their homes electrified, as late as 1988. Because of this, any rise in rent or other fees might quickly cause unrest among the populace, who would believe that their money was spent elsewhere (in the Vaal Triangle, which is likewise managed by the Orange-Vaal Development Board, or the homelands, especially Qwaqwa) or on corrupt or venal councilors and officials.

In several other regions of the country, veterans from the 1950s and early 1960s, or even earlier had a significant impact on the ANC, but less of the PAC in the late 1970s and early 1980s, by serving as a bridge for newer and activist generations. Before the student-led uprisings of 1976-1977, these veterans had been in constant touch with younger and militant activists in some of the Free State towns. In these places, connections were made regarding demonstrations. It was the period where the political space, which was created by the BC, was to a lesser extent replaced by the Charterist-aligned organisations in the area. BC helped to create the climate of Black assertiveness, which saw youth protest escalating all over the country. Using his racial lenses to

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid.* pp. 767-768.

look at student activism, Lawrence Schlemmer regarded BC as a factor, which had polarised young Blacks in their race attitudes and viewed it as containing ‘spirit’, which fueled the disturbances of the students’ uprising in 1976.¹⁹¹

One veteran, who played a significant role in the politicisation of the youth in the late 1970s, was Winnie Mandela. Her banishment in a small three-roomed house in a conservative town of Brandfort (Majwemasweu Township) from May 1977 to August 1985, was an attempt by the apartheid regime to frustrate her politically. Contrary to the aspirations of the regime, Winnie Mandela clandestinely brought some political vibrancy in Brandfort and her influence reached places, such as Bloemfontein and Welkom. Twala explained:

Winnie’s isolation in Brandfort was carefully orchestrated by the apartheid regime with the sole intention of frustrating her politically. Firstly, she was banished to an area where the local spoken language was Sesotho, and she was mainly a Xhosa-speaking person. Secondly, Brandfort was regarded as remote and an Afrikaner dominated town, which would make it difficult for her to organize people politically. The above attempts to frustrate her proved to be a failure however, as she became one of the respected political and community leaders in the area during the period under discussion. While banished to Brandfort, Winnie continued clandestinely with her political influence on some members of the community, hence some of the political meetings were said to have been held in her house.¹⁹²

Twala wrote the following about Winnie:

In May 1977, Winnie Mandela was banished to the small town of Brandfort in the province. She was taken there immediately, together with her daughter Zindziswa, and was allocated a three-roomed house without electricity and sanitation. This banishment was intended to weaken the ties between her as an influential community leader in Soweto and the Soweto youth who looked at her for political leadership. She was to remain in the Brandfort township of Matjwemasweu for eight years. However, this was a miscalculated strategy. because from 1977 to 1985, Winnie made her mark on the small community of Brandfort and became a particularly important political figure for young activists in the township and the surrounding areas. When she defied her banishment order by returning to Soweto in

¹⁹¹ *Sunday Tribune*, 17 February 1980.

¹⁹² C. Twala, ‘Winnie Mandela banishment house in Brandfort (Majwemasweu) – Its historical significance: 1977-1985’, *South African Journal for Cultural History*, 22(2), November 2008, pp. 71-72.

1985, she left behind a legacy of resistance upheld by a militant group of ‘comrades’. During her stay in Brandfort, Winnie contributed to the life of the local community through a variety of projects. She, for example, initiated a feeding scheme and a day-care centre for the children of working mothers and set up a small clinic in her back yard. She also encouraged township residents to plant their own food gardens. Her efforts did not go unnoticed by her detractors, however. In 1980, white residents of Brandfort applied to the Minister of Justice to have her presence in the town reconsidered, as it was causing ‘unhappiness’. The parents of township children also expressed ambivalence. By 1980, Winnie had established herself as an influential figure in the township and her presence was beginning to have a polarizing effect on the community. Some residents felt anxious about her influence over the children and their powerlessness to intervene. Her home had become a hub of political activity for township children and youths and Brandfort became one of the more volatile towns in the Free State.¹⁹³

4.2.1 The extent of networking activities

According to Tshepo Moloi, there is oral evidence, revealing that there were attempts in the province to have underground operations from Bloemfontein to establish an underground cell in Kroonstad. To show that political networking in the Free State started long ago, before the emergence of AZAPO in the region, Moloi quoted one of his interviewees, Mpopetsi Dhlamini, who outlined how this was achieved. In his revelation, Dhlamini recalls meeting a certain, Makoba Moleme, back in 1952 with the latter having established contacts with members of the ANC in Lesotho, as early as 1965. By then Moleme had moved to Bloemfontein.¹⁹⁴ It was during this meeting that Moleme suggested to Dhlamini about his intentions to establish an ANC branch in Kroonstad. Explaining this, Dhlamini said:

Between 1965 and 1969, we kept the communication lines open between us. Feeling confident that he could trust me, Moleme broached the idea of wanting to form an underground branch of the ANC to me and requested me to identify any trustworthy members. I recall that that Moleme arrived in Kroonstad and a meeting to plan the

¹⁹³ C. Twala, ‘The emergence of the student and youth resistance organisations in the Free State townships during the 1980s: A viable attempt to re-organise protest politics’, *Journal for Contemporary History*, 32(2), 2007, pp. 48-49.

¹⁹⁴ T. Moloi, *Place of Thorns: Black Political Protest in Kroonstad since 1979* (Johannesburg: Wits University Press, 2015), p. 46.

establishment of the branch, was held with other people in Sampie Mohohlo's house, in Seeisoville. My colleagues and I held a few more meetings after the first meeting. But before we could start implementing our plan, members of the Special Branch in Kroonstad already had information about our intentions. They were on top of us. Besides being visited by a certain 'BOSS' agent by the name of Captain Khoathela, I was taken to Adami House, the Special Branch offices in Kroonstad, for interrogation. I denied any involvement in underground politics, stating that our meetings were purely about the Young Christian Workers' teachings.¹⁹⁵

Dhlamini's affiliation with the YCM is the source of his political interests. It was noteworthy that a few individuals who attended the planning sessions, relayed the information to the security officers. Any intentions to establish an underground facility in Kroonstad appear to have fizzled out with Moleme back in Bloemfontein and Dhlamini now concentrating his energies on the YCM and eventually departing from Kroonstad for the Tshiya Teachers' Training College in Qwaqwa, later in 1972. It came to light that Dhlamini and Moleme were not the only individuals in Kroonstad who were creating subterranean constructions.¹⁹⁶

Towards the end of the 1970s, several student organisations were established. The Congress of South African Students (COSAS) was launched at a conference in Roodepoort in May 1979, to represent the interests of Black school students after the banning of SASM. The South African Institute for Race Relations (SAIRR) explained that this conference was attended by delegates from the East and West Rand, Soweto, Pretoria, the Northern Transvaal, Qwaqwa (Free State), Cape Town, Port Elizabeth and Natal.¹⁹⁷ Like in many other Free State municipalities, Moloi contends that political mobilisation occurred in the township of Zamdela in Sasolburg. First off, the establishment of the AZAPO branch in 1980 and a COSAS branch in 1985 aided in raising awareness and organising against the local government. Second, the Community Council Act and the Black Local Authorities Act, two Acts enacted by the NP's regime in 1977 and 1982

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 46-47.

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 47.

¹⁹⁷ South African Institute of Race Relations (SAIRR), *Survey of Race Relations in South Africa*, 1979. See also G. Houston, 'The United Democratic Front: A Case Study of Democratic Organisation, 1983-1987', *PhD Thesis*, University of Natal, 1998.

respectively, placed the local council members, who were already viewed as corrupt puppets of the regime, in conflict with the township's youth and adults.¹⁹⁸

4.2.2 The Bloemfontein's (Mangaung's) primary school pupils' activism

This section of the chapter is premised on the fact that, although the BCM also played a role continentally, with the advent of AZAPO on the national shores, the aspirations of BCM were also to be realised at the regional levels. The BCM from where AZAPO originates, was animated by the struggle in the New World. Blacks had more in common with other communities in the Black diaspora, particularly those that were the result of the Atlantic Slave Trade. In the Cape Verde and Guinea, BC philosophy not only provided the philosophical principles for the 'Re-Africanisation of spirit', but more importantly, it offered a sense of belonging and that they should embrace 'Blackness' and continue the struggle for the emergence of their own nationalities.¹⁹⁹ This impact can also be taken further by looking at Marxism that provided the Patriotic African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde (PAIGE) with a way out of the abyss. They saw colonisation as an ideology, one that masked social reality itself. People were not conscious of their own predicament, but they could be made to understand it, hence the role of the national liberation movement. They also understood culture, ethnicity and class, as the product of objective reality, the superstructure, and if one changed, objective reality, culture, ethnicity, and class would change in line with it.²⁰⁰

Confrontational and student politics in Bloemfontein were initiated paradoxically, by primary school learners before they were joined by secondary school learners. At the beginning of late 1978, the AZAPO was at the forefront of the struggle in Bloemfontein, inspired by the BC philosophy. This spirit of 'Blackness' and 'Re-Africanisation', became significant in influencing the 'young minds' in the Free State, under the banned of AZAPO.

The activism of youngsters and their leaders in the Free State townships, combined with their proven ability to undertake political campaigns, contributed positively towards a redefinition of

¹⁹⁸ Moloi, 'Zamdela Township ...', p. 114. For more information on COSAS, see also T. Matona, 'Student Organisation and Political Resistance in South Africa: An analysis of the Congress of South African Students, 1979-1985', *Hons Dissertation*, University of Cape Town, 1992.

¹⁹⁹ A. Tomas, *Amilcar Cabral: The life of reluctant nationalist* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2022), p. 42.

²⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

authority relationships, both in terms of the family order and the state. Within the family order, the determination, displayed by African youths, led to them being regarded with awe and fear by the older generation. They also brought about a reversal of political initiatives between the generations, in the sense that often the cues for political action flowed from youths to their parents, rather than the other way round.

Another influence on these young minds came because of the formation of the Young African Christian Movement (YACM). This happened after the Soweto Uprisings, which did not only mark the outbreak of a widespread Black uprising but had an immense political influence on the students and youth across the country. Mike Mashobane, after his release from Robben Island, following his PAC-related military activities, became instrumental in the organisation of underground activities to continue fighting the apartheid regime. His activities and those of others, led to the formation of the YACM, which later changed its name to being the Young African Religious Movement (YARM). The change of name was also meant to accommodate the Muslim community, which was fervently opposed to the scourge of abuse, but also had very strong activist tendencies. The founding conference in December 1975 was graced by the keynote address delivered in Kagiso Township by Desmond Tutu.²⁰¹

4.2.3 Secondary and Tertiary students' activism in pursuit of AZAPO's ideals

SA presented a highly compartmentalised education system, and this was a living monument to the Broederbond's pervasive influence and its driving determination to promote its cause of an exclusive sectional Afrikaner volk in SA. The ringing call for white unity, which became popular among Nationalist politicians sounded hollow when examined against the background of the educational system they had created and the sectional motives that was behind it all. Therefore, there was a call for national unity of all races in SA and that happened against the backdrop of deliberate barriers, which have been consistently thrown up against common education.²⁰²

²⁰¹ Ndaba B., et al., *Black Consciousness Reader*, in B. Ndaba, T. Owen, M. Panyane, R. Serumula and J. Smith, *The Black Consciousness Reader* (Sunnyside: Jacana Media (Pty) Ltd, 2017), pp. 205-206.

²⁰² I. Wilkins, and H. Strydom, *The Super-Afrikaners: Inside the Afrikaner Broederbond* (Johannesburg, Cape Town: Jonathan Ball Publishers, 2012), pp. 253-254.

The secondary schools outside the Free State, which offered Matric, and the institutions of higher learning, attended by a few of the Free Staters, played a significant role in the politicisation of the youth and the students who attended such. This was a phenomenon across the whole country; thus, the province was not immune to this set-up. Many of the institutions of higher learning were engulfed with the spirit of the South African Students Organisation (SASO) and later the Azanian Students Organisation (AZASO). Undoubtedly, these two organisations provided political education, both formal and informal, linked students to activists off campus, and established networks that survived graduation.

Many young political activists from the Free State pursued their post-matric studies outside the Free State, due to the reasons mentioned above. They were scattered all over the country and as such, got more politically exposed. Those coming from Bloemfontein and studying outside the city, included the likes of Janie Mohapi, who was at Turfloop²⁰³ from 1976-1979 and his younger brother, White Mohapi, who studied in Johannesburg and later in Cape Town. In the ANC's Government post-1994, Janie became the mayor of Bloemfontein (1994-2000). At Turfloop the likes of Oupa Molema also studied from 1974-1981.²⁰⁴ It was where Molema met young activists, such as Mapetla Mohapi (who later mysteriously died),²⁰⁵ Joel Netshitenzhe and Ngoako Ramathlodi, who both became prominent figures within the ANC after 1994. Another activist, Zingile Dingani, enrolled at the Cape College of Education in Fort Beaufort where he became an active member of AZASO. Dingani became MEC for Finance and Expenditure in the Free State Provincial Government from 1999-2004.

The influence of students from Turfloop is heightened in this study for two reasons. First, the population of the Free State is mainly populated by the Sesotho-speaking people. Therefore, it was logical that many, after completing matric, would go to Turfloop for higher education. Second, Turfloop was highly politicized, regarding SASO activities, which later translated into the politics

²⁰³ Turfloop was the University of the North situated in Turfloop (in the then city of Pietersburg and now called Polokwane). The university later changed its name to the University of Limpopo after the configuration of the nine provinces in South Africa after the dawn of democracy post-1994. I van Kessel describes Turfloop as follows, 'The University of the North was commonly known as Turfloop. It played a vital role as a centre of communication, coordination, ideological direction, and recruitment and as a hiding place for activists on the run from the police; thus, it was nicknamed 'Lusaka' in activist and police circles alike'.

²⁰⁴ Interview with M.O.O. Molema conducted by Martha Mokoena, Bloemfontein, 9 October 2002, Free State Archives Oral History Project.

²⁰⁵ For more on the death of Mapetla, see Z. Valela, *Now you know how Mapetla died: The story of a Black Consciousness martyr* (Cape Town: Tafelberg, 2022).

of AZAPO being the topic of discussion in this study. In his in-depth research on Maokeng, Kroonstad, Tshepo Moloi, extensively dealt with the influence of this university to the population of the area and beyond.²⁰⁶ This study by Moloi, to some extent became the backbone of this section on students' activism in the Free State, as a prelude to AZAPO in the later year. Some students from the famous Bodibeng High School in Kroonstad, after matriculating, went to universities. Bodibeng High was the only high school in the Free State, which offered the prestigious Joint Matriculation Board (JMB) in those days. The products from this high school, who studied at the universities, became highly politicised, included the likes of Tsiu Vincent Matsepe, who also studied at Turfloop. Of the Kroonstad students, Moloi wrote: 'The first group, in 1963, included John Taje, Shadrack Kgotlagomang and Elias Rankoe. Among this group, Taje became active at university as a member of the University Christian Movement, which was formed in 1967 to help bring together students from different backgrounds. It was in their gatherings that students began to discuss politics.'²⁰⁷

A second group from Bodibeng, which enrolled at Turfloop during the formative years of SASO, played an important role in conscientising students at Bodibeng in the early 1970s. In an interview conducted by Moloi with Matsepe, the latter recalls: 'In 1969 I matriculated and decided to go to university. By the time we were at the end of high school there was this wind blowing ... The wind of black power emerging in America and then the concept of Black Consciousness arises. At university if you talked ANC, you knew there was going to be trouble. It spelled trouble for you to belong to the PAC. The one thing no informer could not do is to say you're being political if you are talking about 'Blackness'. That is not a political concept.'²⁰⁸

Jacob Ramotsoela was another student hailing from Bodibeng and attended post-matric education at Turfloop. He remembers that at the university he started attending political meetings, called by SASO, and that was the beginning of his political consciousness. He clarifies: 'These meetings politicised us'. In these meetings, 'bread-and-butter' issues were discussed and debated. One important discussion, which concerned students at the time, was the continuous appointment of White, Afrikaner males as lecturers and administrators of the university. This, the students argued,

²⁰⁶ T.C. Moloi, 'Black politics in Kroonstad: Political mobilisation, protests, local government, and generational struggles, 1976-1995', *PhD Thesis*, Wits University, Johannesburg, 2012.

²⁰⁷ Moloi, *Place of Thorns* ..., pp. 49-50.

²⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 51.

was one way of entrenching Afrikanerdom and White supremacy at these institutions. Both Ramotsoela and Matsepe acknowledged that the SASO meetings engraved within them the liberation spirit and were destined first to psychological emancipation and later political liberation.²⁰⁹

From the above, it was clear that these students, although they hailed from the Free State, could not escape the politicization which engulfed Turfloop. In the early 1970s, the university had radically inclined students. In chapter five of the book by Gaongalelwe Tiro, entitled, *Parcel of Death: The biography of Onkgopotse Abram Tiro*,²¹⁰ he writes:

Tiro arrived at Turfloop, aged 23, in 1969 to study for a three-year Bachelor of Arts Degree in History and Psychology. Lack of money and the riots in Dinokana had intermittently interrupted his schooling career. When he got to university, it was in serious ferment for the first time. A coterie of individuals was trying to infuse a new militancy in the student population. Former AZAPO president and Member of Parliament, Pandelani Nefolovhodwe, arrived at Turfloop the same year as Tiro... At that point in his life, Nefolovhodwe held a narrow view of the reality of colonial conquest informed by his rural upbringing, but the robust debates among the students at university changed all that. It helped to grow the political consciousness of new students that there was already a group of activist student leaders' when they got to Turfloop. These included Harry Nengwekhulu, Thekiso Musi, Omphitlhetse Lenamile, Dimpheletse Seun 'Pry' Moshidi and Petrus Machaka. They were hard at work to radicalise student politics at the institution.²¹¹

²⁰⁹ T. Moloi, 'Bodibeng High School: Black Consciousness Philosophy and Student Demonstration, 1940s-1976', *South African Historical Journal*, 63(1), 2011, p. 114.

²¹⁰ Onkgopotse Abram Tiro was born on 9 November 1945 in a small village of Dinokana in the northwest of South Africa. He was forced to leave school at primary level following the strike against the imposition of passes on women. This caused him to work as a child labourer on a manganese mine. He left Dinokana to continue his schooling in Soweto but was arrested for failure to produce a pass. He returned to the northwest and went to Mafikeng to finish his schooling. At Turfloop, Tiro was vocal and politically conscientized students, including those who came from the Free State. During the graduation ceremony in 1972, Tiro delivered a speech whereby he launched a breathtaking attack on the university administration and the apartheid system in general. That speech led to his expulsion from campus but did not dampen his political consciousness beyond Turfloop. For more information on this see University of the Witwatersrand Library Historical and Literary Papers (hereafter referred to as UWL HLP) A2176, (7.2), SASO Collection, 'Speech by Onkgopotse Tiro', 1972. See also A.L. Mawasha, 'Turfloop: Where an idea was exposed, hijacked and redeemed', in M. Nkomo, D. Swartz and B. Moja (eds.), *Within the realm of possibility: From disadvantage to development at the University of Fort Hare and the University of the North* (Cape Town: HSRC Press, 2006); A. Lissoni, 'Student organization in Lehurutshe and the impact of Onkgopotse Abram Tiro', in A. Heffernan and N. Nieftagodien, *Students Must Rise: Youth Struggle in South Africa before and beyond Soweto '76* (Johannesburg: Wits University Press, 2016), pp. 34-44.

²¹¹ G. Tiro, *Parcel of Death: The Biography of Onkgopotse Abram Tiro* (Johannesburg: Picador Africa, 2019), pp. 58-59.

As shown here below, in many of the Free State towns, the employment of the university students, who had been expelled from universities, or who had dropped out, mainly for political reasons, it became a common practice to close the gap of the shortage of teachers. In the Province, this seemed to have been a widespread phenomenon. One of the reasons for this was that many qualified teachers despised coming to work in the Free State, which was regarded as an Afrikaans-dominated region. Another reason was that the Free State was remote and isolated from major urban areas in the country. Although there were some unqualified teachers, who came from other regions, the majority of those who came to work in the Free State's small 'dorpies', were mainly from such.

Having been expelled from the universities, they turned out to be politically valuable in the schools where they taught. Interestingly, those whom they taught were their peers, who were still doing Form 4 or Form 5 in the high schools. Therefore, the act of expulsion by the apartheid regime became counterproductive as high school pupils became politically conscious. For example, Lewele Modisenyane from a small town of Vredefort went to teach in Manthatisi High School in Qwaqwa in 1971. In an interview with him by Moloi, Modisenyane remembered: '... Manthatisi was where we rose, it's where the protests started becoming very serious. You see, it was around the time of Abram Tiro's uprising, 1972. So, some of the students that had been expelled from Turfloop were to teach at our schools. The rapidly expanding influence of BC, particularly in the Free State's high and secondary schools, alarmed several municipal officials, most of whom were White. At one time, Van Aswegen, the town supervisor of Heilbron, who was a White Afrikaner, forbade two Turfloop students who had been granted teaching positions at Phiritona Secondary School from remaining in the township. This demonstrated the intricate nature of the apartheid relationship and demonstrated the instructors' unwillingness to remain silent in the face of it.

There were also those from Kroonstad, who studied at Turfloop and came to teach at Bodibeng High School,²¹² either as qualified or unqualified teachers. Therefore, given space to teach, they got an opportunity to cast their politics onto their pupils. On this Moloi wrote:

²¹² Bodibeng High School, formerly known as the Bantu High School, was a prestigious school, which also attracted students from areas outside Kroonstad. It was also a prized status for many teachers to teach at Bantu High. It was for this reason that the school was always staffed by teachers from different areas, alongside locals. Dating back to the 1940s the school's committee, under Reginald Ndumiso Cingo, identified and employed some of the best qualified teachers in the country. Cingo, rose from within to become the principal of the school. When the National Party (NP) came into power in 1948, it advocated for political, social and economic segregation. Like many other township schools, it became inevitable that politics would filter down into the school environment. It was during this period that

From the oral testimonies collected, mainly from former students and teachers at Bodibeng High during the period under review, there is a strong suggestion that the BC philosophy, communicated to the students by the BC-aligned teachers, played a pivotal role in politicising some of the students at Bodibeng. The argument advanced in this paper is that the appointment of the younger and BC aligned teachers to the teaching staff of Bodibeng High School in the early 1970s challenged the ‘old ways’ of teaching and the older teachers’ authoritarian behaviour. These newly appointed teachers had either graduated from the so-called ‘Bush’ Colleges or had been expelled from the same colleges for political reasons. Furthermore, the admission to the school of highly politicised students from other schools outside Kroonstad also contributed to this challenge. These factors helped politicise some of the students at Bodibeng. Finally, this paper will suggest that the behavioural change of some of the students at Bodibeng also had negative consequences. It caused tensions between the teachers and students and, perhaps, most importantly, seriously affected the long-established impressive educational standards associated with the school.²¹³

To bring the issue of student activism and politics closer home, Twala’s article published in 2018, highlights the situation at the Turfloop satellite campus in Qwaqwa (commonly known as UNIQWA). This article captures the contestation for political space on this campus during the 1980s. However, it should be noted that the findings by Twala should not be read in isolation with what was happening at Turfloop and the township politics of the Free State in the 1980s. SASO was banned in 1977 as part of a national crackdown in the aftermath of the 1976 June students’ uprising. In November 1979, the Azanian Students Organization (AZASO) was established to take up the void left by SASO. It gathered the SRCs from the several campuses of historically black colleges and universities. AZASO and the AZAPO had a solid relationship. With a non-racial approach to student affairs, the name AZASO was retained. Later, nevertheless, AZASO made the decision to identify themselves with the Charterist organizations. Due to its ideological differences with AZAPO, this attitude put it on a collision path with the Charterists. Later, the group adopted the South African National Students Congress (SANSCO) as its new name, fully aligning with the

some of the teachers at the school began to engage their students in political discussions about the situation in the country.

²¹³ Moloi, ‘Bodibeng High School ...’, p. 105. See also T. Moloi, ‘Political mobilization in Maokeng Township, Kroonstad, 1980s’, *Paper presented at the ‘Local Histories and Present Realities’ Seminar*, University of the Witwatersrand, 25 February 2009, p. 27.

Charterists. A new student organization, organized by Turfloop students, was formed because of AZASOs split from AZAPO.²¹⁴

Like the situation at Turfloop, some of the pupils from the Free State enrolled at Fort Hare University. Equally, Fort Hare was politicised. There were some resemblances and differences in the form of politicization, but the product focused on that of political liberation. Of this, and the period before the formation of SASO, Nengwekhulu recalls: ‘At the time there was no black student organisation in South Africa. We tried to find out about the student organization that was formed at [the University of] Fort Hare, the African Student Association [ASA]. It has been formed in the wake of the banning of the liberation movements in 1960, following the Sharpeville Massacre.’²¹⁵ This shows that at Turfloop, students were politicised.

Barney Pitso, who was the University Christian Movement (UCM) leader and later a founding member of BCM, recalls that in August 1968, Steve Biko was sent to become a guest speaker at the Campus Mission at Fort Hare. It was after this speech by Biko that the campus experienced some boycotts for some days, whereby students objected to non-refusal by the university authorities to recognize the UCM. There were also reciprocal relationships between the students’ leadership of Turfloop and those at Fort Hare. For example, Nengwekhulu recalls that at Turfloop they wanted to do away with the Student Representative Council (SRC), the body which was accused of organising ‘braais and parties’ without concerning itself meaningfully with the broader political issues, affecting students and black people. He noted: ‘We wanted to follow Fort Hare and do away with it because it was fighting to join NUSAS’.²¹⁶

At this time, there was already a Bloemfontein Student Organisation, a branch of SASO with the following committee members: Charles Motloutsi and two additional members – Chairperson: Tshela Setai and Eric Phejane. In 1974, Ike Tshitlo and Mpeyake Mashobane attended the 5th SASO in Wilgespruit. The Congress was also attended by delegates from Turfloop, Fort Hare,

²¹⁴ C. Twala, ‘Student activism and contestation for political space at the former University of the North (Qwaqwa Branch), 1986-1996, *Journal for Contemporary History*, 43(1), 2018, p. 146. See also Wits Historical Papers, ‘Delmas Treason Trial, 1985-1989: Constitution of the Azanian Students Movement’, AK 2117-J-2-2-B12-001, p.2.

²¹⁵ Tiro, p. 60. For more information on African Students’ Association (ASA), see S.M. Ndlovu, ‘A brief history of the African Students’ Association’, in A. Heffernan and N. Nieftagodien, *Students Must Rise: Youth Struggle in South Africa before and beyond Soweto ’76* (Johannesburg: Wits University Press, 2016), pp. 6-15.

²¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 63.

Ngoye, Natal Black-Section Medical University and Theological Seminar – FEDSAS. The Congress was addressed by Phandelani Nefolovhodwe, Muntu Myeza and Lybon Mabasa.²¹⁷

Upon returning from Congress, Charles Motlounge became a Security Branch member and Eric Phejane and Tshehlo Setai pulled out of the organization. Their reasons were constant detention, torture and harassment by the security branch members. Tshitlo stressed that harassment and torture were high and brutal. When he returned from the SASOs 5th Congress, he was arrested by a certain Special Branch member, Kgoathela and detained for three months, charged under the Suppression of Communism Act. In most cases SASO and AZAPO members, after the latter's formation, were interrogated by BOSS and not security branch members, only at the building known as the Sondagskool Gebou.²¹⁸ Free State township politics underwent a huge change in the mid and late 1970s.

Undoubtedly, the 1976 Soweto Uprising²¹⁹ and in the 1980s, students continued to set off a wave of demonstrations in several parts of the country, including the Free State, which thrust young people into the forefront of the anti-apartheid movement. AZAPO has its views about the origins of the Soweto Uprisings and credits the SASM and the BPC with sparking the events. AZAPO's main argument is that events prior to June 16, show that no one other than the students under the leadership of SASM can claim responsibility for the uprisings.²²⁰ Following this, several significant youth and student organisations were established in the province. Since most of these groups became affiliates of the UDF, which was established in August 1983, it has served as a haven for them. The UDF was established expressly to fight the Koornhof Bills and the proposed new constitution. Though not in a formalized manner, South African youth, inclusive of the Free State ones, opposed the apartheid regime prior to the UDF's formation.²²¹

²¹⁷ Interview with I. Tshitlo, conducted by Masilonyane Lefuo, Bloemfontein, 28 February 2018.

²¹⁸ *Ibid.*

²¹⁹ The Soweto riots of 1976 demonstrated, in tragically clear terms, the burning hatred young Blacks have for the system of education imposed on them. The apartheid regime's insistence on Afrikaans as a medium of instruction was listed by the Institute of Race Relations in its evidence to the Cillie Commission, investigating Black unrest as the major contributory factor to the uprising, which exploded into injury and death on 16 June of that year. 16 June 1976 will forever remain memorable in South African history. It was a day that shook South Africa and further and undermined its already weak international position. See J. Grobler, *A Decisive Clash? A short biography of Black protest politics in South Africa, 1875-1976* (Pretoria: Acacia Books, 1988).

²²⁰ S.M. Ndlovu, *The Soweto Uprisings: Counter-Memories of June 1976* (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1998), p. xxiii.

²²¹ Twala, 'The emergence of the student and youth resistance organisations in the Free State townships during the 1980s ...', p. 48-49.

Ironically, several pupils from the province's cities were also admitted to Qwaqwa and Bophuthatswana (Thaba Nchu), the two former Free State Bantustans. Because of the unrest in these more stable urban township areas, many parents moved their children to boarding schools; little did they know that this would become a hotbed of student activity and mobilisation. For example, students at Makabelane High School in Qwaqwa opposed the Bantustan education authorities two weeks before the Soweto Uprising in May 1976. A female hostel at Moroka High School in Thaba Nchu, was set on fire in protest. The students' complaints over the dormitory amenities at their school pre-dated the creation of any student or youth movement, hence their protest was not in line with any of those movements.²²²

On student activism at Makabelane, Mokwinihi Motloung recounts:

Students at Makabelane were aware of the political developments around the country and aligned themselves with that. Although some of us had come to Qwaqwa to further our studies, we seriously had a problem with the Bantustan administration and the kind of tuition we received. Teaching at Makabelane was not different from what was happening around the country then... Although during this period, the students did not have formal student structures aligned to any banned political organisation, their militancy and activism was felt by the Qwaqwa government... On 1 April 1976, we went on the rampage at Makabelane High School, because we were dissatisfied with the treatment by the school authorities.²²³

Large segments of the populace, namely, students and young people, were becoming unprecedentedly radicalised. Between 1985 and 1989, the ANC advocated for a policy of 'making South Africa ungovernable' and advancing 'people's power', while the state tried to suppress this student and youth opposition by declaring states of emergency and imprisoning the activists. The ANC's demand was mostly heeded by young people and students, who started to get more involved at this time. Violence was often considered as an efficient way to squash opposition (on the part of the state) or bring about change (on the side of the opponents of the state). S. Johnson asserted that young people across the country were instigators of violence and rebellion against the state, during the 1980s. Here the researcher, in this study, contends that there was a complicated blend

²²² Interview with SDA Monareng conducted by Chitja Twala, Harrismith, 28 September 2004, SADET Oral History Project [Courtesy of the interview availed to me by Chitja Twala].

²²³ Interview with M.E.S. Motloung conducted by Chitja Twala, Vrede, 4 April 2008, SADET Oral History Project [Courtesy of the interview availed to me by Chitja Twala].

of political maturity from the youth and students for the course of the liberation struggle with intense devotion, but sometimes misguided militancy defined their youth activism. Interestingly, youth and students saw themselves as vital players in social and political transformation, protecting their areas from oppressive security forces.

After the 1976 Soweto Uprising, When Fort Hare and Zululand universities reopened in 1978, the administrators of these institutions were equally antagonistic toward student political participation. The Student Representative Council (SRC) was suspended by the University of Zululand administration, due to concerns that it will continue to organise and mobilise students for political causes. Thus, the University of Zululand saw minimal to no delays to its academic programs up until 1983. As the peaceful graduations were held, a few students purposefully skipped the graduation ceremonies to voice their opposition to Gatsha Buthelezi's attendance. The latter was the chancellor of the university for many years. To avoid disturbance by politically inclined students, the institution, for its part, hosted graduation ceremonies every June, during the student break. This was done to ensure that everyone in the student body, aside from the graduating students, would be absent from the graduations when Buthelezi arrived.

This political and academic stability at the University of Zululand was short-lived. September 1983 was the first known case of public violence at a Black university, the University of Zululand. Six students were brutally killed at the University's massacre by armed men, who were allegedly Inkatha followers. At the height of the upheaval in 1977, the SRC was dissolved. In 1982, the University administration tried to resurrect the SRC. In 1982, administrators saw symptoms of impending upheaval and sought to re-establish an SRC. For every course they signed up for, students were told to choose class representatives. After that, an executive committee that would later become an SRC, would be chosen by these delegates. Because they believed that the administration would use such a SRC as a puppet, the students rejected the approach.

Some of the Free State students, at the time felt terrorized, as they witnessed the clamp down on students by the institution's administration, as well as the KwaZulu Bantustan government of which its leader was the University's chancellor. Thamsanqa Mazibuko from Intabazwe Township in Harrismith remembers:

Although I was not that much involved in politics on campus, the situation and repression from the management of the University called for political changes there. At some point,

we were not sure how to respond to the situation. However, it was clear that the students were provoked, and the situation got out of hand in September 1983 when some were massacred by the warriors. We had to retreat to our hometowns for some time. The youth and our peers wanted to know what triggered the killing of these students. Information that was publicized by them on the media, was selective.²²⁴

With the establishment of the UDF in the early 1980s, the students and youth were inspired, as their structures became affiliates of this inclusive organisation. Other affiliates included civic associations, and labour/trade unions. Mazibuko recalls that the University of Zululand sensed that there were signs that branches could be established on campus, the management moved swiftly in the promotion of Inkatha and its youth brigade, as the movement of choice. This, he argues, was to counter the spread of the UDF on campus and in the surrounding areas.²²⁵

Political allegiance took the campus politics to other levels. What became known as the Ngoye Massacre on 29 October 1983, shocked the whole country. The clash was triggered when students opposed an attempt by Inkatha leader, Buthelezi, to use the campus for a ceremony to commemorate the death of King Cetshwayo. Attackers broke down locked doors behind which students were hidden, dragged them out and assaulted and stabbed them with traditional weapons. In this commotion, four students and one Inkatha member were killed.

Students at institutions around South Africa found inspiration in the UDF formation in 1983. The creation of student organisations, labor/trade union formations, and civic associations, came next. The university administration began to push the IFP as the movement of choice, after realizing that support for the UDF would lead to the establishment of a chapter at the University of Zululand. Tensions between students and management resulted from efforts to create a management-controlled SRC with the goal of weakening support for the UDF on campus. The University remained closed for the remainder of 1983. When the academic year resumed in 1984, hundreds of students did not return.

Max Makhubalo studied at Fort Hare (1976–1978). Fezile Dabi, a key activist in Tumahole, studied at Fort Hare in the late 1970s. Elias ‘Ace’ Magashule was expelled from Fort Hare, due to political activism. He returned to Tumahole in Parys and assisted with the establishment of the

²²⁴ Interview with T.T. Mazibuko conducted by Chitja Twala, Harrismith, 19 April 2008, [Courtesy of the interview availed to me by Chitja Twala].

²²⁵ *Ibid.*

Tumahole Student Organisation (TSO). Before the establishment of TSO, he was instrumental in establishing the Parys Student Organisation, a BC inclined organisation.²²⁶ Some of the young people in Tumahole had to attend school in Thabong, Welkom and others opted for Sebokeng High Schools, because there were no Forms 4 and 5 at Phehellang Secondary School in Tumahole. AZAPO also had a presence in Thabong and joined forces with COSAS, in organising the first political funeral there in August 1984. Bunga Xaluva, who may have shifted to the Charterist politics, became the main key player of AZAPO in the area. In these high schools, political consciousness was high and these students from Tumahole were easily hooked into student politics. According to Seekings, the students from Tumahole used ‘... their experiences in schools in Welkom and Sebokeng, as a basis for organizing on their return to Tumahole’.²²⁷

Annie Heffernan explained the following about the country’s political situation and students’ politics post-1976:

Student politics in South Africa underwent seismic shifts between 1976 and 1980. In early 1976, the South African Students’ Organisation (SASO) remained a major force on black campuses, while its graduates and proponents preached Black Consciousness ideology in schools in some of the country’s biggest townships...But, though its impact on South African youth was critical, the student movement was still not considered a central force in liberation politics, either by government or by the more established liberation organisations; it represented one element of the resistance against apartheid, alongside the armed struggle, liberation organisations in exile, and trade union movements.²²⁸

Terror Lekota, another Free Stater, hailing from Kroonstad, completed his matric at Marianhill’s St Francis College in 1969. He later enrolled at Turfloop for a Social Sciences Degree. It was at Turfloop where he got engaged in SASO politics and was expelled in 1972, due to his political activities within the SRC and SASO. He was also the organizer of SASO. In 1974, he was imprisoned on Robben Island for ‘conspiring to commit acts endangering the maintenance of law and order’. He was accused of having organised the ‘Viva FRELIMO’ victory rallies to celebrate

²²⁶ Interview with E.S. Magashule conducted by Moses Mzwandile Hadebe, for ANC Oral History Project, n.d. Tumahole was one of the townships administered by the Orange-Vaal Development Board, which raised rents and service charges. Activists in the township under the TSO banner led and shaped the growing opposition, which culminated in a mass demonstration in mid-July 1984.

²²⁷ J. Seekings, ‘Political mobilisation in Tumahole, 1984-1985’, *Africa Perspective: Agrarian struggles in South Africa – The Debate Continues*, 7(8), 1989, p. 111.

²²⁸ A. Heffernan, *Limpopo’s Legacy: Student politics and democracy in South Africa* (Johannesburg: Wits University Press, 2019), p.127.

the independence of Mozambique and released in 1982.²²⁹ After his release, he was elected Publicity Secretary of the UDF in 1983. In 1985, he was later detained and later sentenced in what became known as the Delmas Treason Trial. He was released in 1989 after the Appeal Court reviewed the sentence. Terror Lekota did visit townships like Tumahole, meeting with local activists, giving them political materials and advice, and encouraging them to organise and protest. In many townships, local activists did try to galvanise protests as part of the national struggle, sometimes to the point of alienating the more cautious residents. Younger activists often turned in the 1980s to the veterans of the 1950s and early 1960s for guidance.

Papi Kganare was another activist from Bloemfontein, who was known as a militant student at Sehunelo High School. He completed his matric at the same school in 1978 before he headed for Pretoria. It was during his stay in Pretoria that his political consciousness was sharpened. He recalls that during this period, the politics of AZAPO took the centre stage in some of the country's major towns or cities, like Pretoria. Although he did not align himself with AZAPO's politics, he continued to have contacts with those aligned to the congress-movements. One of his clandestine mentors in Pretoria was Father Mkhathshwa²³⁰ (despite his banishment orders) and his church was in the Soshanguve vicinity. It was in this church where political discussions ensued. It is difficult to comprehend how Mkhathshwa managed to host the youth, such as Kganare and others for what the latter called political education. He says: 'I think we were about five to eight and the discussions there were purely political. We read mostly banned books and documents. We started

²²⁹ The BCM gained momentum in the mid-1970s and developed a strong following. Many of those detained during this period were from its ranks. One of the most significant events in the history of the BCM in the first half of the decade, was the 'Pro-FRELIMO' rallies. Thus, events signaling the independence of Angola and Mozambique had a radicalizing effect on the BCM and indicated that the potential existed to bring about an end to apartheid. SASO planned to hold rallies in various centres around the country in September 1974 to celebrate the victory in Mozambique and inspire interest in the BCM. The rallies were banned, and the police dispersed the crowds that turned up at the various centres. For more information see, J. Brown, 'An experiment in confrontation: The Pro-FRELIMO rallies of 1974', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 38(1), 2012, pp. 55-71.

²³⁰ Father Smangalis Mkhathshwa was born in 1939 in Barberton, in Mpumalanga (then Eastern Transvaal). After matriculating from Pax College in Pietersburg, in 1960, he enrolled at St Peter's Seminary where he was later ordained as Minister in the Catholic Church in June 1965. After this, he worked as a priest in Witbank until 1970, and thereafter he was seconded as the church's general secretariat of the Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference (SACBC) in Pretoria. In 1973 he enrolled and furthered his studies at the University of Leuven in Belgium and completed an MA in Philosophy and Theology. Upon his return to South Africa, he proceeded with his duties as the SACBC secretary. Mkhathshwa was a pivotal figure in the movement against apartheid. Following the student revolt in 1976, he spent four months in detention. A five-year ban that ended in July 1983, followed this. After two months, he was arrested once more and accused of subversion, inciting public unrest, and speaking at an unauthorized assembly. Nevertheless, he was acquitted and freed the subsequent year. He was selected to be the patron of the UDF shortly after his release.

understanding the context in which the struggle was being waged. Issues of non-racialism versus racialism were discussed. At that time AZAPO was seen as the representative of the people inside the country'.²³¹

Another prominent activist in the Free State's town of Welkom, was Zanele Patricia Dlungwana, who after matriculating from Tshepo-Themba High School in Sharpeville, also attended the University of Zululand. It was in both these institutions that she cut her political teeth after being politically mentored by Bokwe James Mafuna, who later became a career journalist.²³² She was influenced by BPC politics. Students like the ones listed above started to network and influence others during the break before returning to their townships.²³³ Protests that started in Kroonstad in the middle of the 1980s extended to neighbouring townships, such as Viljoenskroon's Rammulotsi. There is proof that Rammulotsi was affected by a two-day consumer boycott that was started by the Kroonstad's UDF and AZAPO. Workers in both towns went on a stay-away at the same time as this. The boycott came because of protests of the imprisonment of 60 students, the murder of Rammulotsi activist, Meshack Letshabo, and the dismissal of 43 employees from Kroonstad.

Similar challenges as above were also experienced in other neighbouring schools. For example, the severe lack of infrastructure at Bodibeng High and Kananelo Senior Secondary schools was another cause of protests. In Kutloanong, the events appear to have been mostly identical. Former Kutloanong student, Mxolisi Dukwana, recounts interactions with Thabong-based student activists. The Kutloanong Youth Congress (KUYCO) was established in 1986, because of the Kutloanong students' resistance, and on 17 November 1986, there was an explosion at Phehello High School. However, it is unclear if network-building came about, because of, or before, the demonstrations. Funerals for those slain by the police, or political funerals, provided chances for

²³¹ Interview with D.A. 'Papi' Kganare, conducted by Benjamin Mvumeni Makhubalo, Bloemfontein, 3 February 2006, SADET Oral History Project. See also Interview with D.A. 'Papi' Kganare, conducted by Tsitso Challa and Hans Mosoeu, Bloemfontein, 9 August 2005, Free State Archives Oral History Project.

²³² Bokwe James Mafuna was born on January 14, 1937 in Mafikeng. He became a union trade organizer among metalworkers, but abandoned this in 1968, protesting the discriminatory policies of the Trade Union Council of South Africa (TUCSA). He was also a founder member of Media Workers Association of South Africa (MWASA), the BC inspired trade union movement. In 1969 Mafuna was hired by the *Rand Daily Mail* to write for its township edition. As journalist he met students from SASO, who were strongly articulating the BC philosophy. As a journalist he ended up identifying himself with this philosophy and continued to publish extensively on students' activities at the time. During the meeting for the South African Journalists Association in 1971, Mafuna openly agitated for a separate, explicitly political organisation for Black journalists that became known as the Union of Black Journalists. This articulation by Mafuna was an indication of being BC inclined.

²³³ Interview with Z.P. Dlungwana conducted by Mohlomi Masooa, Bloemfontein, 28 March 2006, SADET Oral History Project.

post-protest network development. At funerals, activists from nearby towns and even Johannesburg would show up and occasionally receive speaking invitations.

In Zamdela, Sasolburg, Phil Bonner and Noor Niefertgodien argue that the township politics in the area were organised in ethnic terms. The South African Synthetic Oil Limited (SASOL) became a divisive tool, as mainly people in that company were hired and appointment because of ethnic lines. They also acknowledge that these divisions were the apartheid regime's intention to promote the homeland system, or homeland's politics in the township. During this period and in the early 1970s, some of the residents in different townships became involved in homeland politics, representing their own ethnic groups.²³⁴ It became clear, as well as difficult for the liberation movements underground and above-ground to mobilise support effectively without having to deal with these challenges, thus, making it difficult to be penetrated and no specific ethnic group wanted to spread opposition politics. Inevitably, this restrained political activism in the township.²³⁵

According to Moloi, it was also ironic that during this period, the residents of the area barely knew each other, therefore, to have a closely-knit political network was bound to fail. They only had bonds as workers for SASOL and with little, if any, political bonds, except perpetuating the homeland politics at all costs. As it would be shown in the subsequent sections of this chapter, it took students of Nkgopoleng Secondary School to challenge the status quo.²³⁶

About AZAPO in Zamdela, Moloi explained that with the banning of 17 other BC aligned organisations in October 1977, a few days thereafter, the interim leadership of the organisation was arrested by the Special Branch and served with banning orders. This action halted the organisation's activities and hence its inaugural conference was held in September 1979.²³⁷ Besides agreeing on the urgent need to form branches throughout the country, activists attending the 'delegates' convention in 1978, agreed that AZAPO should focus, inter alia, on working towards a society with a common education system for all; to working closely with all the Black

²³⁴ P. Bonner and N. Niefertgodien, *Kathorus: A history* (Cape Town, Maskew Miller Longman, 2001), p. 59.

²³⁵ In the 1960s, after the ANC was banned, members of the ANC established underground cells to keep the ANC's politics alive and conscientise people in different communities. See G Houston and B Magubane, 'The ANC political underground in the 1970s', in: SADET (ed.), *The Road to Democracy in South Africa, Volume 2, 1970-1980* (Pretoria: UNISA Press, 2006).

²³⁶ T. Moloi, 'Zamdela Township: The exploration of confrontational politics, early 1980s and 1990s', *Journal for Contemporary History*, 43(1), 2018, p. 120.

²³⁷ *Ibid.*

workers; and to oppose all government-created institutions and ethnic-orientated organizations.²³⁸ It was against this background that a branch of AZAPO was established in Zamdela, led, amongst others, by Charles Mabitsela.²³⁹

Moloi further elucidated that confrontations were likely spearheaded by students and youth, because the adults who joined later were busy with homeland politics. When the residents experienced some rent hikes and other socio-economic challenges, like all other townships in the province, Moloi indicated that they opted for the following:

Leading figures within AZAPO in Zamdela took advantage of the crisis brewing in the township to recruit and ferment its position in the township. In August 1980, the Zamdela Community Council hiked rent. The residents boycotted paying rent. On 30 April, students at Nkgopoleng Secondary School, in solidarity with their parents, took to the streets. AZAPO, which opposed all the regime's created institutions, joined the demonstration. The demonstrators vandalized the property belonging to the council; attacked Tsatsi Primary School and broke its windows; and torched two houses belonging to local councillors. The police acted forcefully and crushed the demonstration. A few days later all those perceived as the leaders of the demonstration were rounded up and arrested. Solly Dhlamini, who was 15 years old, was one of them. The arrested students spent 14 days in detention. Finally, they were charged for public violence. Their trial took place in Parys, where they were represented by Priscilla Jana – one of the few lawyers who represented political activists in South Africa. The court found the students not guilty, and it acquitted them. While Dhlamini and his co-accused were in detention, there was another group of students from Nkgopoleng, who were arrested and charged for sabotage. They spent eight months in detention.²⁴⁰

The arrest of Dhlamini and his co-accused triggered unrest and boycotts in the area, as the residents demanded their acquittal. On the other side, Moloi contends, Mabitsela and others in the local branch of AZAPO, saw the detention of these students as an opportunity to recruit for AZAPO. Mabitsela assisted the parents of the detained students to find legal representation, which was offered by the well-known human rights lawyer, Priscilla Jana. This act by Mabitsela earned him

²³⁸ M.V. Mzamane and B. Maaba, 'The Azanian People's Organisation, 1977-1990', SADET, *The Road to Democracy in South Africa*, vol. 4, 1980-1990. See also T. Moloi, 'Black student politics in South Africa, 1990-1996', in SADET, *The Road to Democracy in South Africa*, vol. 6, 1990-1996 (Pretoria: UNISA Press, 2013).

²³⁹ Moloi, 'Zamdela Township ...', p. 120.

²⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 127.

respect and popularity in the township for having championed the liberation struggle and recruiting more members for AZAPO. Moloi quotes Dhlamini stating: ‘We were detained and charged and went through a trial. After the trial we were approached by people like Ribs Ramushi. He was very close to Mabitsela. These were the people who approached me. They explained to me that there was a political organisation fighting for the rights of Black people and this was AZAPO. They informed me that it is a successor to the organization, which was led by Steve Biko. I would say these were the first steps toward political [...] education for me. Although, I never joined AZAPO, but I participated in some of their activities’.²⁴¹

4.3 The Bloemfontein Student League (BSL) as the precursor to AZAPO in Mangaung

The division of schools in Mangaung, along ‘ethnic’ lines, contributed immensely to the politicisation of pupils and students to lean towards AZAPO’s politics. In this township, there were schools for Tswanas and Basotho, but no school for Xhosa-speaking students existed. At the secondary school level, Sehunelo Bantu Secondary School was to accommodate only Tswana-speaking students, and Lereko was for Sotho-speaking students. Subsequently, Ikaelelo was built to accommodate Tswana-speaking students, but still no school existed for Xhosa speakers. Only Ihobe, which ended up in Form 3 (current Grade 10) enrolled Xhosa students.²⁴²

For Xhosa students to complete matric, they had to attend Lereko High School with a dubious arrangement that students must attend all subjects together and split only when attending Sesotho and IsiXhosa contact sessions. On hindsight, this led to overcrowding in schools and the challenges were compounded by the shortages of learning materials and furniture for these schools. For these challenges, many students were accommodated in different churches and taught by underqualified teachers. In an interview with Fikile Qithi, one of the student leaders at the time and later Deputy Chairperson of AZAPO in the Free State Province, lamented that following the apartheid and Bantustan systems, IsiXhosa teaching was not found all over the province. Due to migrant labourers from the Ciskei and Transkei, there were selective areas offering the language.²⁴³

²⁴¹ Interview with S. Dhlamini, M. Malindi and C. Mabitsela conducted by Tshepo Moloi, Sasolburg, 8 August 2011. [Courtesy of the interview availed to me by Tshepo Moloi].

²⁴² Interview with F. Qithi, conducted by Masilonyane Lefuo, Bloemfontein, 20 May 2018.

²⁴³ *Ibid.*

The above challenges in the education sector impacted heavily on the day-to-day politics of the residents. Thus, when AZAPO's branch was established, its political stance could not be divorced from what was happening in the townships, regarding service delivery issues. The Education Department officials enforced tribalism. Both Lereko and Sehunelo Secondary Schools were in the same erven. But they were divided by a wall, called the 'Berlin Wall', with the intention of not allowing inter-connection between learners from both schools. But as eluded, the 'Berlin Wall' was later destroyed in 1980 by amongst others, Gauta Lefuo, Kamanda Thapedi, Morapedi Musa, Kenosi Mohapi, Magic Kgotseng and Pokes Senokoane.²⁴⁴ As it will be shown in the subsequent sections of this chapter, some of these leaders became instrumental in the congress-aligned activities and others followed the BC route.

Serious confrontations with education authorities in Mangaung happened a year after the Soweto Uprising in 1977 and later. This was exhibited when both students and youth were unyielding and determined in their course to influence changes in the education system. Students in the Mangaung schools organised themselves immediately after the Soweto Uprisings, but their attempts were expunged or thwarted by the police, hence they reorganised themselves with aplomb in 1977.²⁴⁵ The death of Steve Biko in September 1977 also contributed to the politicisation of Mangaung students and communities. Some built up from this, in the formation of AZAPO. This was followed by the apartheid's regime announcement with the banning of BC aligned organisations. Along with these organisations, the military junta also banned the two sister newspapers, *The World* and *The Weekend World*, which was both edited by Percy Qoboza.²⁴⁶

The political developments that happened before the above-mentioned events, were preceded by the trial and imprisonment of the SASO/BPC trialists in Pretoria, the killing of Mapetla Mohapi in detention, Griffiths Mxenge, Mthuli ka Shezi, the mutilation of SASO President, Onkopotse Tiro by a parcel bomb in Kgale, Botswana, and many more incidents. The comprehensive banning of various BCM formations and their leadership, together vindicated that the regime had launched a total onslaught against the movement with a view to liquidate it.²⁴⁷ Subsequent to this political

²⁴⁴ Interview with P. Senokoane, conducted by Masilonyane Lefuo, 20 February 2017.

²⁴⁵ C. Twala, 'The emergence of the student and youth resistance organisations ...', p. 68.

²⁴⁶ M. Mangena, *On your own: Evolution of Black Consciousness in South Africa/Azania*, p. 113.

²⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

trajectory, the entire country was however engulfed by the militancy and the revolutionary philosophy of the BCM. Mangaung was not spared in the process.

It was in this political context of state repression and brutality that AZAPO was forced to exist. It should also be remembered that immediately after its launch on the 28th of April 1978, several of the AZAPO leaders were arrested and even before a constitutional or launch conference could be held, they were served with restrictive orders. They included Ishmael Mkhabela (National Chairperson), Lybon Mabasa (Secretary General) and Khehla Mthembu, who were banned for five years, including house arrest.²⁴⁸ Therefore, providing clarity on the delay of formal students' activism, after 16 June 1976 could also shed light on the hardship the Mangaung students endured. Despite this, Twala contends that there were also unique local socio-political grievances, such as: there were clandestine roles played by the underground political activists, influencing the Mangaung student riots in 1977; students or youth organisations in Mangaung rallied outside support from other student population elsewhere; the links with outside students were maintained; underlying developments of a revolutionary consciousness among Mangaung students were also discussed.²⁴⁹

After the arrest and incarceration of the founding members of AZAPO, after it was launched at Sain Agnus, consolidation of the little gains made, and the establishment of AZAPO and BCMA, were reconfigured on Robben Island. Those arrested and with some given house arrests, included the likes of Ishmael Mkhabela, who was sent to Modderbee Prison, Lybon Mabasa, the secretary and Khehla Mthembu was detained. The regime intended to obliterate AZAPO systematically, and to instil fear in those who intended to pursue the ideology of BC philosophy.²⁵⁰

In pursuit of the issue of political contradictions within Mangaung and the surrounding areas, inclusive of the contestation for political space between the underground structures of the ANC and AZAPO, as well as Winnie Mandela's banishment to a conservative town of Brandfort in the Free State, ignited political consciousness amongst the youth and students. As mentioned before, the home of Winnie became a citadel for political awareness to those who will be members of the ANC, could also create conflict and a political outlook in Bloemfontein. Her house was also used as an initiation for those who wanted to join Umkhonto weSizwe (MK), thus, to conjure a

²⁴⁸ Interview with I. Mkhabela, conducted by Masilonyane Lefuo, Johannesburg, 20 July 2021.

²⁴⁹ Twala, 'The emergence of the student and youth resistance organisations ...', p. 69.

²⁵⁰ Interview with Qithi.

battlefield of political difference between members of an AZAPO and ANC aligned organisation.²⁵¹

Gail Nattrass wrote the following about Winnie and her influence on the youth: ‘Admired by many for her bravery and strong anti-apartheid stance, she has been condemned by others for the strong measures she was prepared to support during the struggle... She was held in solitary confinement for over a year and then banished to Brandfort, a remote town in the then Orange Free State. Despite the restrictions placed on her, she continued to campaign for equal rights and became an icon of the struggle.’²⁵² Perhaps as explained later in this chapter, this clarifies why former members of the Executive Committee of AZAPO in Mangaung abdicated their political convictions and joined the ANC, some ultimately becoming the commissars of MK in exile.

With the above, it became clear that to some extent AZAPO was at the forefront of the students’ political struggle in Mangaung post-1976 Soweto Uprising. The formation of COSAS in Mangaung added another political dimension to the area. COSAS was at loggerheads with the Azanian Students Movement (AZASM), launched in 1984, which was aligned to AZAPO. AZASM became the secondary students’ wing and Azanian Student Convention (AZASCO), the tertiary students’ wing of AZAPO. The First National Executive Committee members of AZASM were: Kabelo Lengane, Tsietsi Baloi, Jacky Hlapolosa, Pule Manana and Nonhla Hlahla, Moatisi Hlongwane and Kenny Modise. Kabelo Lengane was to be elected the inaugural president of AZASM in 1983 and was expelled from the University of the North (UN) in the same year for his political activism. Notwithstanding this expulsion by the authorities at the University, he was re-elected for another term. At the end of his term as the president, he served as AZASM Publicity Secretary on its Second Executive Committee. Lengane left SA for a life in exile at the height of the onslaught against cadres of the BCMA and their families in 1986 by the UDF members and the security branch. In exile, he joined the Zimbabwean chapter of the BCMA and its military wing, the Azanian National Liberation Army (AZANLA), and received his military training in Libya.²⁵³

²⁵¹ Interview with M. Koenane, conducted by Masilonyane Lefuo, Bloemfontein, 10 June 2021.

²⁵² G. Nattrass, *A short history of South Africa* (Johannesburg and Cape Town: Jonathan Ball Publishers, 2019), pp. 229-230.

²⁵³ Interview with I. Mkhabela, conducted by Masilonyane Lefuo, Johannesburg, 26 March 2019.

Later the Azanian Youth Organisation (AZAYO) was also launched. Those who were on the leadership on AZAPO's branch locally, were tasked with the establishment of the local COSAS branch. The organisation was already active at the national level. The active members of COSAS were Rasta Lefuo, Kamanda Thapeli, Raselebedi Kgotseng, Monnanyane Morena, Shasha, Peter Maloro, Sam Lenko, Percy Molaoa, Ephraim Morake, Vusumuzi Motlolometsi, White Tamosi Mohapi and Papa Khusela (all of them were from Lereko Secondary School). In Ikaelelo Secondary School, was Maniki Mosotho and Tsovey Wolf. In Moemedi it was Mothoesele Kgatheane. At Vulamasango Secondary School, it was Nontsokolo Mzuzwane.²⁵⁴ Thapeli, Khusela and Kgatheane, who later joined the MK. Thapeli was later ambushed in Heidedal Location after he was surrounded by military police and security branch members. It was in that exchange of bullets and after running short of ammunition that he eventually killed himself with a hand grenade.²⁵⁵

In 1983, the COSAS Mangaung branch members attended the launch of the UDF in Cape Town, Mitchell's Plain, Rocklands. From the local leadership, White Mohapi, Kamanda Thapeli and Rasta Lefuo formed part of the organizing committee. Meetings were held at Jannie Mohapi's place. To ferry COSAS members to the launch of the UDF, one bus was organised and sponsored by Winnie Mandela, directly from Johannesburg, and another one was outsourced from Jacaranda Bus Company in Bloemfontein. The place for departure was Pax Nova in Bochabela Location, Bloemfontein. On the eve of departure, two buses arrived as planned. However, immediately when people were about to depart, the Special Branch members arrived, leading to pandemonium with people running away to avoid being arrested. At the end only 34 committed activists left for Cape Town. Unfortunately, the bus sponsored by Winnie Mandela was forced to return to Johannesburg, as people were intimidated by the Special Branch members. Arriving in Cape Town, Rasta Lefuo was later interviewed by the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), regarding their ordeal at Pax Nova and along the way to Mitchell's Plain, together with Zach Jacobs, Archie Gumede and Martha Mahlangu (Solomon Mahlangu's mother).²⁵⁶

The journey to the UDF launch proved to be a litmus test and exposition to non-racial politics for members of COSAS from Mangaung. After their return from Cape Town, Rasta met with

²⁵⁴ Interview with P. Moloro, conducted by Masilonyane Lefuo, Bloemfontein, 20 November 2017.

²⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

Phekonyane and what transpired from their discussions, led Rasta to be introduced to Qithi by Phekonyane. As it will be shown, this meeting changed the students' political landscape in Mangaung.

With the formation of the AZASM in 1982, it created a political platform for Black students, based on the living ideology of the BC. In its preamble, it stressed the repossession of the land. AZASM further believed that the Black workers are the most oppressed and exploited class in SA, and therefore the avant-garde of the liberation struggle, thus consolidation and solidification of Black Student-Worker solidarity were vital. The resolution was to establish a national student organisation, which would express and manifest the aspiration of the Black students, also ensuring that it is part of the Black people and the national liberation struggle.²⁵⁷

In its first national congress, which was held in 1981, in Cape Town, Masilo 'Rasta' Lefuo, Raselebedi Kgotseng, Mpikeleni Duma and Peter Maloro were sent as delegates to represent Bloemfontein. According to Duma, one of the resolutions in respect to broader student participation, was to extend the membership to primary schools as well. Returning from the National Congress, in February 1984, at Lereko Secondary School, a new executive of AZASM was elected in Mangaung. Those elected included: Chairperson - Masilonyane 'Kenya' Lefuo; Deputy-Chairperson, Percy Molaoa; Secretary-General, Masilo Lefuo; Organiser, Raselebedi Kgotseng; additional members Monnanyane Morena, Vusumuzi Motlolometsi, Sam Lenko, Peter Moloro, Mpikeleni Duma and Ephraim Morake.²⁵⁸

The election of a new executive committee of AZASM unleashed a political bifocal and contestation in student political landscape, which was for a time dominated by the Congress of the South African Students (COSAS) in South Africa, and Bloemfontein in particular. At Historically Black Universities (HBUs), political activities became polarised between the Azanian Student Convention (AZASCO) and the South African Student Congress (SANSCO), with the dominant SANSCO often denying AZASM access to university and organizational resources through its control of SRCs to limit the growth of BC.²⁵⁹

²⁵⁷ Azanian Student Movement's (AZASM) Constitution: It's preamble.

²⁵⁸ Interview with R. Kgotseng, conducted by Masilonyane Lefuo, 26 September 2017.

²⁵⁹ G. Cele and C. Koen, *Student politics in South Africa: An overview of key developments*, 2003, p. 7.

The immediate agenda of the newly elected executive of AZASM in Bloemfontein, was to consolidate its membership from different primary and secondary schools. This was to be achieved by the adoption of a key political plan of action. The first project was the 'Winter School' programme, targeting Form 1 up to Form 5 pupils. According to the Deputy-Chairperson of AZASM (Bloemfontein Branch), Molaoa, they consulted the Department of Education, soliciting accommodation and teaching aids materials, but the Department became intransigent and rejected their request. Qithi referred them to Tshitlho, former treasurer of AZAPO. In the researcher's interview with Tshitlho, he indicated that the project became the first 'Winter School Project' in Mangaung. They provided AZASM with dusters, chalk, chalkboards, writing pads and food for the participants. The Bicentenary Methodist Church was used as a teaching centre for this purpose.²⁶⁰

The aims and objectives were to create a forum for students to articulate and to express their aspirations as part of the Black people; to mobilise and unite students around the liberator ideology of BC; to encourage the total involvement of students in problems facing the student community, as well as those that are facing the Black people in general; working towards a national-building education system, which would instil a sense of creativity, identity and self-reliance amongst the students of Azania, thus, working towards total eradication of the racist exploitative and oppressive system in SA, and the ushering in of a socialist, anti-racist society.²⁶¹

The success story of this project was corroborated by two women working in the Department of Health in Bloemfontein as health practitioners, namely, nurses. In an interview conducted with Masatile Phekonyane, she confirmed that the Winter School Program assisted her to complete matric. Initially, she worked as an assistant nurse at Pelonomi Hospital, but after passing matric, she was promoted to become a full-time nurse.²⁶²

Another project was the Black Students Study Project (BSSP). This project was held at the University of the Western Cape (UWC), and it was conducted by Neville Alexander. His purpose was to provide well-resourced educational materials for student activists, and he out-sourced academics from UWC to teach during their holidays. This was done by taking into consideration time lost while they were absent from school, and attending seminars, conference and congress

²⁶⁰ Interview with Tshitlho.

²⁶¹ *Ibid.*

²⁶² Interview with M. Phekonyane, conducted by Masilonyane Lefuo, Bloemfontein, 16 September 2017.

meetings, thus done as a mitigating factor. There was also a collaboration between AZASM and COSAS members from Lereko and Vulamasango Secondary School, respectively. For example, Spire Ngombane taught English, Masilo Lefuo taught Biology, Masilonyane 'Kenya' Lefuo and Vusumuzi Motlolometsi taught Geography.²⁶³

The Winter School Study Project and BSSP were conceptualised in line with the SASO, community-cum political projects, also spreading ideas about self-reliance and conscientizing pupils and students with BC philosophy, as well as the aims and objectives of AZASM and the political programmes of AZAPO and the BCM. In these projects, a clarion call was made to recruit students to join the military wing of BCMA, called the Azanian National Liberation Army (AZANLA).²⁶⁴

The late 1970s and early 1980s era was marked by political mobilisation and upheavals, with main revolutionary actors being the politicised working-class unions, militant student organisations that remained resilient and resolute and political organisations with a far greater degree of mass participation. The use of the army and police apparatus to quell the political turmoil was intended to infuse false quiescence, contrary to the unfolding unprecedented historical phenomenon, geared towards the total overthrow of the apartheid regime, which was starting to become too weak and too politically timid or moribund to suppress the rising political consciousness of the Black masses.²⁶⁵

It was also a period of Bantu education and apartheid government. The education system for Blacks was still not transformed. There was a lack of textbooks, a shortage of qualified educators, especially for Maths and Science, and a glaring lack of school libraries and laboratories with no laboratory instruments for experimentation. White people wrote history with deliberate distortion of events. There was no transport for school kids staying far away from school. According to Kgotseng, for example, there were pupils who were commuting daily from Glen to Lereko Secondary School, using the train.²⁶⁶ In April 1984, in the Western Cape (Khaya College), a student consultative conference was held, comprising of COSAS and the AZASM, to draft a

²⁶³ Interview with M. Duma, conducted by Masilonyane Lefuo, Johannesburg, 28 October 2017.

²⁶⁴ Interview with Qithi.

²⁶⁵ Interview with Mkhabela.

²⁶⁶ Interview with M. Mkhuzanwe, conducted by Masilonyane Lefuo, 10 October 2018.

charter and constitution for a Student Representative Council (SRC) in primary and secondary schools, respectively.²⁶⁷

The SRCs were to replace the Prefect System, which was viewed as an undercover structure, used by the regime to maintain the political status quo and was also seen as a political coy to make students docile and anti-politics. SRCs were to politicise and highlight the inferior quality of education in Black schools. Black students were encouraged to analyse political issues that impacted their lives constantly. They were also urged to commit to their studies and attempt to be efficient ‘educational soldiers’, who would defend their people against disinformation orchestrated by the white power structure. Students were encouraged to swell the ranks of COSAS and AZASM membership. The Prefect System was destroyed and ultimately replaced by radical and militant SRCs.²⁶⁸

The apartheid regime, according to Molaoa, vociferously introduced indoctrinating camps at Roodewal, in collaboration with the military department (SADF) to outsource possible ‘sell-outs’ and to divide the student community. He argued that after prefects were elected, they would be transported by military cars with White military personnel dressed in military appurtenance, being fetched in the morning from school. At Roodewal they would be provided with food and accommodation. The following day, presentations will be made by White military personnel, with topics embellished with invocation, urging students to refrain from joining any student political organisation, in particular AZASM and COSAS. These organisations were labelled ‘terrorist organisations’ and intended to disrupt schools and cause anarchy.

Prefects were also told not to join any ‘communist’ organisations. Money was made available for those who could provide information, regarding ‘instigators’ of violence and school disruption and report them to the police. This led to some students becoming ‘informers’ or ‘sell-outs’. However, with the joint effort by members of AZASM and COSAS, the Roodewal project was later abandoned.²⁶⁹

Lastly, according to Kgotseng, the regime later introduced ‘Eagle Youth Clubs’ to counter youth wings of political organisations like AZAYO and Mangaung Youth Congress (MAYCO). Camps

²⁶⁷ Interview with Kgotseng.

²⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁶⁹ Interview with Molaoa, conducted by Masilonyane Lefuo, Bloemfontein, 15 September 2017.

were organised with seminars and topics, ranging from ‘terrorist organisations’, examples being ANC, PAC and AZAPO, and ‘terrorist leaders’, such as Mandela, Sobukwe and Biko. The importance of apartheid and Bantustans for different ethnic groups were clear. The Eagle Youth Club was later obliterated by AZASM in Mangaung. Their meetings were held at Mmulakgoro Library in Mangaung and many of their members later joined AZAYO.²⁷⁰

Qithi argued that the establishment of the covert and stealthy organisation was to counter the rising spirit of political consciousness, militancy amongst students and their resistance. Every effort was made by any means necessary to try to cling tenaciously to a dwindling political power by the apartheid regime. However, they succumbed ultimately to the global phenomenon of the ‘Wind of Change’, which was also sweeping across the African continent.²⁷¹

On 27 February 1984, Moses Kaibe, a member of the AZASM from Lereko High School branch was hit and killed by a car in Rocklands next to the new Shoprite Complex. This incident happened during the student unrest, orchestrated from Lereko High School. According to Sam Lenko, COSAS ironically claimed that Kaibe was their member, and this led to a meeting between COSAS and AZASM executives at Vulamasango Secondary School where both claimed his membership. The consensus was reached for joint burial, but after that meeting, the funeral was later arranged and organised by COSAS, assisted by UDF members, isolating AZASM from the funeral arrangements. Kaibe was buried on 9 March 1985 at Magengenene Cemetery in Phahameng.²⁷²

The death of Moses Kaibi followed the intensification and nationwide students’ call, both by AZASM and COSAS, for democratic SRCs in schools. Other demands were the release of arrested students, and the removal of the army from the townships, free textbooks and reduced school fees, and readmission of expelled students. It was at his funeral where police repeatedly threw teargas at mourners before they could even bury him.²⁷³ This section of the chapter also shows the existing gap, regarding space, time perspective and political context in which AZAPO and its sister organisations developed their political activism in the area.

The events that followed the 1976 Soweto Uprising weakened the secondary schools’ ability to mobilise politically and had a big influence on student politics in the 1980s. Early in 1978, attempts

²⁷⁰ Interview with Kgotseng.

²⁷¹ Interview with Qithi.

²⁷² Interview with S. Lenko, conducted by Masilonyane Lefuo, Bloemfontein, 20 October 2017.

²⁷³ *South African Students Press Union (SASPU) Publication*, 6, (1), March 1986, p. 4.

to organize students in Soweto were unsuccessful. First among these was the creation of the Soweto Students League (SSL) in March 1978 to bring back the SSRC and organize students in opposition to new policies implemented by the Department of Bantu Education. The SSL scarcely had an effect and was short-lived. Its leadership was compelled to go into hiding after only a few months of its founding.

In August 1978, SSL President, Oupa Mlangeni and Secretary, Teboho Moremi took off for Bloemfontein, where they hid for a few weeks. A significant student rebellion that lasted several weeks at Bloemfontein, occurred in September because of this. Black townships in Bloemfontein were in a state of chaos at the end of September after skirmishes between police and rioting students left several dead and maimed. Mlangeni and Moremi, along with many other Bloemfontein students, escaped to Lesotho as police brutality worsened, joining the South African Youth Revolutionary Council (SAYRCO) there. One of the SAYRCO members in Bloemfontein, Mzwakhe Mashabane (underground operative), was later shot and killed by the security branch members. Mashabane was recruited by Tsietsi Mashinini and Kgotso Seatlholo.²⁷⁴ The final significant student rebellion of the 1970s was at Bloemfontein.

The Bloemfontein Students League (BSL) was founded in Bloemfontein in 1978 at Ike Moroe's place. Its subsequent meetings were held at Zenzele Hall. The President of BSL was Luckyboy Moloisane. Other members from different secondary schools were Ditaba Mokgosi, Sekgopi Malebo, Mzwakhe Mashobane, Boikie Madikgetla, Papi Kgotseng, Janes Mothibi, Pule Wesi, Tebogo Khoabane, Playfair Morule, Hlopo Detilo and Dan Mmile. However, strategy and tactics of infiltration and dismemberment was used by the Security Branch to weaken the BSL by organising spies within its members.²⁷⁵ The BSL meetings were held around soccer matches and during the night, using Royal Knights Soccer ground. Political issues, which were discussed were lack of classrooms, overcrowding, and lack of qualified teachers. Soccer games were also organised between Ihobe and St. Bernard High School. It was in these soccer games that pamphlets were distributed with Black Consciousness logos and the death of Steve Biko, urging students' solidarity with the Soweto students. Three days after 16 June 1976, schools in Bloemfontein were closed indefinitely by the government's education department.²⁷⁶

²⁷⁴ Interview with I. Moroe, conducted by Masilonyane Lefuo, Bloemfontein, 4 January 2017.

²⁷⁵ Interview with D. Mokgesi, conducted by Masilonyane Lefuo, Bloemfontein, 20 August 2018.

²⁷⁶ *The Friend*, 24 August 1976, p.1.

According to Malebo, it was at such meetings where many of the students also listened to Radio Freedom,²⁷⁷ a broadcasting mouthpiece of the ANC in Zambia. Radio Freedom aimed at encouraging the oppressed masses in SA to continue with national struggles of resistance against the apartheid regime.²⁷⁸ In a book, titled *Guerrilla Radios in Southern Africa*, Tshepo Moloi, in Chapter Ten, entitled 'Radio Freedom, Black Consciousness, and the struggle for liberation in South Africa', correctly ventilated the fact that Radio Freedom's functioning from exile happened during the time when the BCM was active and vibrant, and more importantly, that Radio Freedom exposed many of the supporters of the BCM to the ANC and its politics, and also motivated some to flee the country to join the ANC's military wing in exile.²⁷⁹ Members of the BSL were adherents of Radio Freedom. Following its inception, the BSL delegation was sent to Winnie Mandela's banishment house in Brandfort for consultation and mapping the way forward for students' politicisation and activism. According to Ditaba Mokgosi, when they arrived in Brandfort, and with the political discussion embellished with Azanian exaltation, overtone and motif, they were referred to as agents of apartheid, with Winnie being strongly anti-Azanian and AZAPO.²⁸⁰

The founding of the COSAS in 1979, was the second effort to organise students in Mangaung. Throughout its early years of operation, COSAS had trouble expanding its student membership in the area. They did, however, become embroiled in disputes with members of AZAPO, due to

²⁷⁷ Radio Freedom was launched surreptitiously as a clandestine radio station in June 1963. It played a major role in providing an alternative voice to captive an audience inside the country during the heyday of apartheid. It offered a different perspective of the history of South Africa; it gave political education to its listeners about what the ANC stood for and about the organisation's campaigns, and it was also a major source of inspiration for political activists inside the country wanting to join the MK. This radio broadcasting became a strategic priority for the ANC and its allies in the aftermath of the violent crushing and the turn to the armed struggle. It was used as a key tool used by the liberation movement to counter the apartheid regime's propaganda messages and to articulate an alternative political perspective. Through Radio Freedom, the ANC could directly connect with its supporters inside the country and influence political mobilization, particularly during the 1970s and 1980s. Despite the illegality of tuning into the station and the jamming techniques used by the State to block signal transmission, individuals from the younger, more politically active generation of Black South Africans did find creative, but discrete ways of tuning in to Radio Freedom. For more information on this see S.P. Lekgoathi, 'The African National Congress's Radio Freedom and its audiences in apartheid South Africa, 1963-1991', *Journal of African Media Studies*, 2(2), 2010, pp.141-142; S.P. Lekgoathi, 'Radio Freedom, Songs of Freedom and the Liberation Struggle in South Africa (1963-1991)', in M.J. Grant and F.J. Stone-Davis (eds.), *The Soundtrack of Conflict: The role of music in radio broadcasting in wartime and in conflict situations* (Georg Olms Verlag: New York, 2013), pp. 111-129; C.A. Smith, 'Radio Freedom: A history of South African Underground Radio', <<https://theappendix.net/posts/2013/12/radio-freedom-underground-radio-in-south-africa?fbclid=IwAR0dXO4PzTJa-EgIrm84mmYsMkzDh7Oyu8PSJOnzLztmK0LjrOBKVECFRmc>>2012.2023, (Accessed on 17 June 2022).

²⁷⁸ Interview with S. Malebo, conducted by Masilonyane Lefuo, Bloemfontein, 10 January 2018.

²⁷⁹ T. Moloi, 'Radio Freedom, Black Consciousness, and the struggle for liberation in South Africa', in S.P. Lekgoathi, T. Moloi, A. Romão Saúte Saúde, *Guerrilla Radios in Southern Africa: Broadcasters, Technology, Propaganda Wars, and the Armed Struggle*, (Rowman & Littlefield), pp. 184-281.

²⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

differences in political ideologies. It should be indicated that when AZAPO was formed in the Free State and Mangaung in particular, residents of the provinces' townships experienced some of the municipalities' grievances. On the general impact of COSAS and other AZAPO related organisations, Seekings explains:

However, it was not long before students, led by COSAS and AZASO at tertiary institutions, began to engage in politics beyond educational issues. This shift was caused by the deepening economic crisis in South Africa in the early 1980s and the government's reforms, which in African townships created the Black Local Authority (BLA) town councils without financial and decision-making powers. It was at this stage that COSAS began to participate in community and worker issues.²⁸¹

Adding to the above, Moloi explains:

During these periods, school-going students and their organisations led (and in some instances, dictated) the direction of protests in the township. Undoubtedly, at this stage, the dominant student organisation in the township was COSAS. It commanded a sizeable following in almost all high schools in the township. This was evinced by the dominance of members of COSAS in the school SRCs. Other student organisations in the township were the AZASM and Pan Africanist Students' Organisation (PASO).²⁸²

4.3.1 The turn to AZAPO and its political trajectory in Mangaung

Bloemfontein, despite being the bastion of the apartheid regime and with its history after the formation of the Union of South Africa, received a status of being one of the Boer Republics, and together with Transvaal, it became a political arena for many political organisations. For example, it was in Bloemfontein where the South African Native National Congress (SANNC) the frontrunner of the ANC was founded in 1912, and the city where the National Party (NP), which became government of SA, in 1914. These two parties/organisations became the leading governments of South Africa in years to come, starting with the NP from 1948 until 1994 and the ANC taking over from 1994. It was also in Bloemfontein where many of the ANC conferences

²⁸¹ J. Seekings, *The UDF: A History of the United Democratic Front in South Africa, 1983-1991* (Cape Town; Oxford; Athens: David Philip, James Currey, Ohio University Press, 2000), pp. 128-129.

²⁸² T. Moloi, 'Black student politics in South Africa, 1990-1996', in South African Democracy Education Trust, *The Road to Democracy in South Africa, vol. 6 (1990-1996), Part 2*, (Pretoria: UNISA Press, 2013), p. 1189.

were held. Fast-tracking this to the 1970s with the formation of BC, again Bloemfontein became an attractive place for the BC aligned structures. With the BC structures operating at local levels in the mid-1970s and resulting in the growing influence of BC and the desire of SASO to consolidate unity and solidarity among Blacks and many of the organisation's structures, a conference of several Black organisations was held in Bloemfontein on 24 April 1971 where the idea of such co-operation among Blacks received affirmation from all participants.²⁸³

BC, and later AZAPO, called for the following in attempts to galvanise support: repossession of the land; transfer of political and economic power to the Black majority; redistribution of the wealth of the country; the establishment of a unitary state; total liberation of Black people; setting up a socialist state of Azania; an anti-racist, anti-sexist, egalitarian society, and anti-capitalist state as the goal.²⁸⁴ The envisioned socialist state would become without intermediary factors, the direct political organisation of the production apparatus, the general manager of the nationalised economy and the hypostatized collective interest. It will become the directing force of the country's economic development, the directing force of the economy.²⁸⁵

Many of the adherents of BC philosophy were schooled in Leninism and following his revolutionary statements as quoted in his writings. Accordingly, Lenin propagated for the following: that the existence of classes is connected only with certain historical struggles, which arise out of the development of production; that class struggle necessarily led to the dictatorship of the proletariat; and that this dictatorship is itself only a transition to the abolition of all classes and to a classless society.²⁸⁶

In the inevitable conclusion after analysing the above, Lenin argues that the first act in which the state really comes forward as the representative of society as a whole – the seizure of the means of production in the name of society, is now at the same time its last independent act as a state.²⁸⁷ Thus, the researcher contends that a socialist state would ultimately consolidate the conquering of political and economic power. As Lenin puts it: 'state is unnecessary and impossible in a society

²⁸³ M. Mangena, *Quest for true humanity: Selected speeches and writings* (Johannesburg: Bayakha Books, 1996), p. 21.

²⁸⁴ Office of the Secretary-General – AZAPO – Circular No. 4/93.

²⁸⁵ H. Marcuse, *Soviet Marxism: A Critical Analysis*, (Vintage Books, 1961), pp. 121-124.

²⁸⁶ J. Lenin, *State and Revolution* (London: Aziloth, 1933), pp. 27-28.

²⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 15.

without class antagonism'.²⁸⁸ The lucidity of a classless society was also expressed in affirmation by Cornforth when he said: 'When classes disappear, the instrument of class struggles, political parties and the state apparatus – will, as a result, lose their functions, cease to be necessary, gradually disappear and, having completed their historical mission, give way to a higher stage human society.'²⁸⁹

The late 1970s and early 1980s was the period of the turning point in SA. At this point a massive intensification of the struggle took place against the apartheid state. In Mangaung, like in many other parts of the country, there were also other underlying political and socio-economic factors, which ultimately led to the political awareness or re-awakening of the entire community. Generally, Blacks, and particularly Africans, faced tremendous and difficult injustices in SA. These were inferior Bantu education, overcrowding in schools, inadequate housing provision, unemployment, poor infrastructural development, racial discrimination and poverty.

The experiences at school level and how pupils were subjected to poor services contributed immensely to making the ground fertile for the establishment of an AZAPO branch in Mangaung and elsewhere in the province. Evident to this was the agitation by both pupils and community members for the building of more schools, sports and facilities, such as the libraries and science laboratories. Interestingly, this rising power came from the Ihobe Higher Primary School. As confirmed by Sekgopi Malebo, one of the activists and later Member of the Executive Council (MEC) for Public Works and Transport in the Free State post-1994, the politicisation of pupils led to the conscientisation of the community, and this made it easier for the establishment of underground structures of the liberation struggle. Without strictly mentioning AZAPO per se, he alluded to the fact that the apartheid regime had it tough in controlling the mass-based structures, which had their strong roots in the communities.²⁹⁰

At this primary school, students were led by Qithi and Mpho Diba, who gave Mgcina, the principal who hailed from the small town of Reitz, tough times in terms of disturbances that ensued in the township. Although he was amenable to the concerns of the pupils and community, unfortunately, the apartheid regime would not allow him to openly sympathise with them. Other teachers at the

²⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁸⁹ M. Cornforth, *Science versus Idealism: In defence of Philosophy against Positivism and Pragmatism*, 1955, pp. 226-227.

²⁹⁰ Interview with S. Malebo, conducted by Masilonyane Lefuo, Bloemfontein, 10 July 2018.

school, who were sympathetic to the course, included the likes of Maqhina, Victor Shumani, Miss Sebolai and Ntlola. However, there were other educators, who came from the Eastern Cape and became politically influential to the pupils and community members. These included the likes of Madokeni (from Cradock), Jijaca (from Ginsberg), as well as Jakats (from Port Elizabeth). Another one was Stifero Mothibi (from Lesotho). Sakhiwo Belot taught English when he returned from Fort Hare.²⁹¹

As mentioned here above, many of the teachers from the Eastern Cape were politically conscious and influenced by BC. Qithi recalls that Shumani, who was a history teacher, would without fail introduce his lesson by reading the current news from *The World* or *Rand Daily Mail* newspapers. For example, he would interpret the French Revolution against the political situation in SA, ventilating issues of equality, freedom and democracy. With his teaching methods, Shumani was explicitly showing how bad apartheid was and with it the intentions to destroy the social hegemony and fibre of the South Africans. Shumani was conscious of what he was doing, and this attracted the attention of the security forces and questioning his actions. Interestingly, by the time he was cautioned of his ‘subtle’ political influence, many pupils had already caught the political vibes of the time.²⁹²

Political education programs were also relevant during the South African student/pupils’ organisations era. For example, as explained previously, during SASO’s era, the organisation became an intellectual hub for students seeking to make sense of their oppression. They utilised the organisation to access books that sharpened their intellects. One of the immediate consequences was a search for relevant political knowledge. ‘Formation schools’ were formed, where participants spent an intensive period discovering issues pertinent to their lives. SASO organizers understood it to be a means to allow the participants the chance of self-development through participation in discussions and other group projects that offer training in leadership qualities.²⁹³

The AZAPO in Bloemfontein was formed in April 1978 at Ike Moroe’s place.²⁹⁴ The first executive committee of AZAPO comprised of: I. Moroe – Chairperson; K.K. Stofile – Deputy-

²⁹¹ Interview with Qithi, 20 July 2018.

²⁹² *Ibid.*

²⁹³ I.M. Macqueen, *Black Consciousness and Progressive Movements under Apartheid* (Pietermaritzburg: KwaZulu-Natal Pres, 2018), pp.41-45.

²⁹⁴ Interview M.Z. Sekoere, conducted by Masilonyane Lefuo, Bloemfontein, 17 June 2018.

Chairperson; M. Letshabo – Secretary-General; and T. Moroe – Treasurer. More was immediately arrested after AZAPO was launched in Bloemfontein. He was arrested and charged with treason and sedition under Section 6 of the Terrorism Act of 1956. Upon his arrest, Moroe was sent to Modderbee Prison where, according to him, he was severely tortured. After three months in prison, he was released and banished to Bethlehem. He went into exile in Lesotho, where he joined the ANC. It is, however, not clear why he deflected into the ANC, despite being within AZAPO's leadership structures and becoming the chairperson of the local branch. Subsequently, he was sent for military training in Zambia where he worked directly with Oliver Tambo and Thabo Mbeki in the Department of Publicity and Propaganda. He later joined MK and was later promoted to the rank of commissar. His incognito name of MK was Grant Moloto and his nom de guerre in Radio Freedom was Kgositsile Moloto.²⁹⁵ It should be noted here that in most cases, people would in exile join either the ANC or PAC, as they were the main liberation movements recognised outside the country. Therefore, it was not surprising when the likes of Moroe joined the ANC, because there were no AZAPO structures then in exile.

Immediately after Moroe had escaped into exile, the second executive committee of AZAPO in Bloemfontein was elected in 1978. It consisted of the following activists: Kgopane Letshabo – Chairperson; Zacharia Sekoere – Deputy Chairperson; Ike Tshitlho – Secretary General; and Kenke Sejanamane – Treasurer. Sejanamane was also tasked with communication and pamphleteering of BC material. He was also expected to run with AZAPO's local activities, including liaising with the national structures. Both Letshabo and Sejanamane were teachers at Legae Primary School, while Sekoere was teaching mathematics at Batho Higher Primary School.²⁹⁶

Sekoere said that he firstly met with Letshabo and Sejanamane at Strydom Teachers' College in Thaba Nchu, and both were from Bantu High School, later renamed Sehunelo High School in Mangaung.²⁹⁷ Letshaba encouraged them to listen to Radio Freedom. Interestingly, listening to Radio Freedom and the songs about the fall of Mangope (leader of the then Bophuthatswana where the college was situated) resonated well within them as student activists. One of the famous songs

²⁹⁵ Interview with Moroe.

²⁹⁶ Interview with Tshitlho.

²⁹⁷ Bantu High School's name changed to Sehunelo High School in 1969 with D.D.N. Rametsi as the Principal.

was *Mmuso wa Mangope a tla wela fatshe mohlang Mandela a lokallwang*” (The regime of Bantustan leader, Mangope will fall when Mandela is released from prison).²⁹⁸

Another influential person to the Mangaung young activists was a certain Sekhathea, who hailed from Lesotho. He worked in Bloemfontein as a railway employee. In Lesotho, he was a member of the Basotho Congress Party (BCP), which was led by Ntsu Mokhehle. The latter used to invite him to Radio Freedom. As a railway employee and staying in the township, he also became involved with the local ‘bread and butter’ politics of the time. Besides the instrumental role played by Sekhathea, another person was Eugene Mokeyane, who worked as a clerk at the Bantu High School. Mokeyane was a member of SASO and introduced Tshitlho to Mashobane and the two worked together in pushing the struggle forward and recruiting some people to join the ranks of AZAPO locally. Sekoere recalls that it was during these meetings that they discussed BC philosophy and its revolutionary outlook. During this politicisation process, it was for the very first time that he was introduced to the readings of Marxism and Leninism.²⁹⁹ At some point, Mokeyane skipped the country and returned with a PhD in Theology and never abandoned the revolutionary course.

With the formation of the AZAPO branch in Mangaung, it was clear that the resurgence of radical politics was taking a different turn with a generation of students involved. This was also a generation that was, overall, too young to have felt and experienced first-hand the cowering effect of repression after Sharpeville. The rise and spread of BC in SA are best understood in the context of the deepening crisis under apartheid, as it filtered down and began to affect this new generation of Blacks that had to devise new strategies to cope with their existential situation. By 1984, an upsurge of resistance was occurring in most urban townships.³⁰⁰ For example, the school boycotts, which broke out in February 1980 in Coloured schools in the Western Cape, quickly spread to some schools in the then PWV and Free State. In the Free State, students began boycotting classes

²⁹⁸ Interview with Sekoere.

²⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰⁰ M. Marks and P. McKenzie, ‘Militarised Youth: Political Pawns or Social Agents?’ in J. Cock and P. McKenzie, (eds.) *From Defence to Development: Redirecting military resources in South Africa* (Claremont: David Philip, 1998), p. 223.

in July 1980 in Botshabelo, Qwaqwa, after which Thaba Nchu followed. In September 1980, the boycotts spread to Mangaung, Bloemfontein.³⁰¹

The rise and prominence of AZAPO in Mangaung during the political repression of the late 1970s, proved the resistance that the community members had. This resistance caught the attention of both the young and the older people in the city and inspired a new revolutionary fervor in the struggle for political freedom. Within the formation of AZAPO branches in the Mangaung and generally in the Free State, the influence of the long-held views by the BC members penetrated to the grassroots levels. Induced by BC philosophy and the revolutionary zeal of those who had studied in the institutions of higher learning outside the city, revolutionaries joined the struggle for the liberation in Mangaung. With the visionary leadership of the local leaders, such as Moroe, Sekoere, Sejanamane, Tshitlho and others, AZAPO became a force to be reckoned with in Mangaung.

The above-mentioned leaders became a key instrument of struggle for the psychological and physical liberation of Black people, not only in Mangaung, but all over the country. This was evident through the connectedness of the networks these leaders had with other like-minded ones from outside the city. The establishment of AZAPO in Mangaung proved the resuscitation of intellectual, political and historical resources in the community. Political influence in Mangaung heightened as a politically inclined community could turn for nurturing and sustenance. As shown here above, the students' uprisings marked the high-water mark of the AZAPO era, bringing to the fore an even younger generation of secondary school activists, who would invigorate the Black aspirations, regarding the struggle for liberation, further demonstrating the indomitable nature of the human spirit.

The abysmal political situation of AZAPO in Bloemfontein, led to it becoming moribund and less intrepid. However, undercover political activism was developed, like the promotion of poetry, which was used as vehicle, a conscious political trajectory through which political and social ideas could follow. Creation of small and well-organised political units used to abrogate organisational disjuncture, animated to eliminate the most indecisive members, and the creation of a climate of confidentiality. In 1975, he lost his employment and went to Welkom to work at Oppenheimer

³⁰¹ J. Hyslop, 'School Student Movements and State Education Policy: 1972-87', in W. Cobbett and R. Cohen (eds.) *Popular Struggles in South Africa* (Africa World Press, 1988), p. 188.

Hospital as a trainee male nurse. It was in Welkom where he recommitted with Moss and Dick Seoka to establish an AZAPO branch and later linked it with the AZAPO branch in Bloemfontein.³⁰²

As the chairperson of AZAPO, together with some of his confidantes, Moroe established Bloemfontein's Black Artists and Writers Association. He later became the president of the Black Journalist Association in the Free State, and Deputy-President of the Media Writers Association of South Africa (MWASA), nationally. AZAPO created contacts with Zwelakhe Sisulu, Thami Mazwai and Mathata Tsedu in Johannesburg. Over the weekends he used to write for *The Friend* newspaper as a local freelancer. According to him, the newspaper was used by AZAPO as a platform for concretizing and popularising BC philosophy.³⁰³ For his political activities, Moroe was arrested in 1978 and charged under Section 6 of the Terrorism and Communism Act of 1956. He faced 25 charges and was sent to Modderbee Prison, where he met with Aubrey Mokoena, Billy Masetla, Roller Masinga, Tom Manthata, Terrence Tyron, Jayron Kgokong, Ishmael Mkhabela, Lybon Mabasa and Rachidi (past President of BPC).³⁰⁴ However, as alluded in chapter five of his study, seemingly Moroe and other like-minded activists were not grounded on the BC philosophy, hence, on arriving in exile, some of them joined other liberation movements, which existed there.

In Mangaung in particular, members of the executive committee of AZAPO, after a long-term detention without trial, constant harassment and brutal assault by the Security branch members, fled the country and went to different African countries in exile. As mentioned before, the first Chairperson of AZAPO in Mangaung, Moroe, after his release from Modderbee Prison was banished to Bethlehem, fled to Lesotho and later went to Lusaka in Zambia to join ANC and MK. Sekoere, former Vice-Chairperson of AZAPO in Mangaung, joined the ANC in exile and MK. Letshabo, the second elected Chairperson of AZAPO in Mangaung, together with Sejanamane, the Treasurer, also joined ANC in exile. Another leader, Ditaba, went to Lesotho.³⁰⁵

Other people, who were also animated by the BC philosophy, were later arrested and incarcerated in different prisons in Bloemfontein, in other parts of the country and subsequently some on

³⁰² Interview with Tshitlho.

³⁰³ Interview with Moroe.

³⁰⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁰⁵ Interview with Ditaba Mokgosi, conducted by Masilonyane Lefuo, Bloemfontein, 20 August 2018.

Robben Island. The likes of Nthatsi, Malebo, Thenge Moadira, Agent Seboko, Kgotseng, Qithi, Diba and Modise Phekonyane, Casca Mokitlane and Ernest Malete (Parys) were sent to Robben Island. Lack of political homes for members of BCM exacerbated mass movement or exodus to either the ANC or Pan-Africanist Congress of Azania (PAC). Amongst many prominent activists to cross over to the ANC, were Mosiuoa 'Terror' Lekota and Nkosazana Dlamini (later Dlamini-Zuma).³⁰⁶

AZAPO's political activism in Bloemfontein were under constant and consistent surveillance of the Security Branch. The Security Branch would use local people to attend meetings and report directly to them of any resolutions in these meetings. These people were referred to as 'impimpi' (sell-outs). Some of them were trusted individuals within the organisation and were paid by the apartheid regime to execute that job. On 21 May 1980, during the massive student unrest in Mangaung, Daniel 'Papi' Mokotoko, a 17-year-old schoolboy was fatally shot and killed by the police's riot squad. His funeral was attended by approximately 19 000 mourners. In that funeral, the members of the Bloemfontein branch of AZAPO, namely, Kenke Sejanamane, Kgopane Letshabo and Mathata Letshabo were arrested.

It was in October 1983 when AZAPO called for its national council meeting to be held in Cape Town. One of its agenda points was the intensification of the organisation's total boycott of the upcoming local authorities' elections, which were to roll out throughout the country. The organization, including the Mangaung branch, was against the local authorities' elections, as this was viewed as division and as a tool used by the apartheid regime to perpetuate the 'divide-and-rule' policy of the regime. According to Mzamane and Maaba, AZAPO's national branch issued a directive that all branches were to actively participate in the campaign against these pseudo reforms as canvassed by the regime.³⁰⁷ Because of its visibility and political activism in the area, AZAPO slowly expanded its ranks, taking advantage of the fertile situation, created by students.

With the release of BPC and SASO activists in 1983 from Robben Island, a stage was set by those who remained resolute, never in the penumbra of unfolding political discourse and resisting to be servile to revivify AZAPO, its political quiescence or stasis was to be transmogrified in 1984, at Laudium in Lenasia, with the election of a new National Central Committee. Amongst those

³⁰⁶ Interview with Qithi.

³⁰⁷ Mzamane and Maaba, p. 1316.

elected were: Hlaku Rachidi – Vice President (Transvaal); Imran Moosa – Vice-President (Natal); Lybon Mabasa – President; Peter Jones – Vice-President (Western Cape); Fikile Qithi – Vice-President (Free State); Thabo Ndabeni – National Organiser; Sefako Nyaka – Secretary General; Saths Cooper – Deputy President; Muntu Myeza – Publicity Secretary (Department of Information and Communication); and Zithulele Cindi – Project Coordinator.³⁰⁸

The researcher here recalls that in Mangaung, AZAPO had an interim structure in 1992. The interim structure of AZAPO in Bloemfontein was informally constituted by Qithi, Diba, Motlatsi Matsosa, Archie Belot and Mkhathu. Most of their meetings were held at Molemela Hotel. The facilitation for these meeting and venue was handled by Kgotso Mokhele. Meetings were held every Wednesday evening. It was in these meetings when many people were recruited into AZAPO. In these meetings, the following members were recruited: Letebele Mosala, Mosimane Sebokolodi, Soke Botsane, Moeketi Moloao, Masilo ‘Rasta’ Lefuo, Mpikeleni Duma, Vusumuzi Motlolometsi, Mamiki Mokgele, Isaac Bosman, Mongezi Daka, Sarone Motlhanke, Monnanyane Morena, Peter Maloro, Mzwandile Sout, Makalo Mopeli, Sam Lenko, Masilonyane ‘Kenya’ Lefuo and Raselebedi Kgotseng.³⁰⁹

Two political education programmes were held at the Molemela Hotel to improve the political consciousness of members before they could be inducted as full members of AZAPO in line with BCMA, which was to be run in accordance with the aims and objectives through its secretariat, as stated in Article IV(H) of its constitution, understanding of scientific socialism, which was based on the spirit of *Towards a Free Azania Projection: Future State* as adopted at the 1975 BPC in King Williams Town. Proper understanding of BC philosophy and the Constitution of AZAPO were decisive and peremptory.³¹⁰

Later, in 1986, epigones of the Azanian Student Organisation (AZASO) supported the Freedom Charter, which articulated for non-racialism and adopted capricious political predilection towards the ANC-aligned formations, such as COSAS and UDF. In 1986, AZASO changed its name to the South African National Students Congress (SANSCO), unleashing a new polarised student political activity, which forever became exceedingly variegated and bifurcated.³¹¹ However, the

³⁰⁸ C. Till, *Biko: The Quest for True Humanity, Apartheid Museum*, p. 50.

³⁰⁹ Interview with Qithi.

³¹⁰ Till, *Biko: The Quest for True Humanity ...*, p. 50.

³¹¹ Interview with Duma.

entrancing future vision of socialism believed in the achievability of a universal order, which would totally liberate the human spirit. Scientific achievement would be made available or accessible to all working people. People will be able to read, write, count and organise themselves, with total fulmination against sloppiness, sloth and inefficiency. And the political acme of socialism was women's participation and equal treatment with their male counterparts.³¹²

Prior to the formation of SANSCO, already in 1985, the political orientation of AZASO was towards non-racialism and signs were already there that it had abandoned the BC philosophy and socialism. After completing their matric, some members of AZASM in Mangaung went to enrol at the universities across South Africa. In Bloemfontein they were excluded to enrol at the University of the Orange Free State (UOFS), because it was exclusively an Afrikaner institution, not allowing Blacks to study there. Faced with this apartheid policy dilemma, based on social exclusion and discrimination, some members of AZASM enrolled at Vista University, Bloemfontein campus in 1985.³¹³

On 6 September 1992, a workshop was held at the old Vista University on the Bloemfontein campus where Shadow Mokwena from Welkom, accompanied by Mzimkhulu Ndweni, presented a paper on the SASO Policy Manifesto. This was one way of conscientizing students about the first principle that SASO was a Black student organization that sought 'the liberation of the Black man from psychological oppression by themselves' and 'from physical oppression', because of living in a White racist society. Its second principle defined Black people as those discriminated against as a group 'in South Africa and who identified themselves as a unit in the struggle' for liberation. Its third point posited the belief that SA would be 'a country in which both Black and White live and shall continue to live together.' Also that the White man must be made aware that one is either part of the solution or part of the problem, but because of their choice of privilege and support for apartheid, Whites had defined themselves as part of the problem.³¹⁴

Another project was to recruit educators. AZAPO nationally has embarked on a political programme, specifically for Black educators, called Black Education Convention (BECON). Its aim was to mobilise educators around the BC philosophy. In Bloemfontein, its co-ordination was done by Archie Belot. Contacts were also made with Bassy Mokuoane in Senekal, Bheki Manzini

³¹² R. Service, *Trotsky: A biography* (Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2009), p. 314.

³¹³ Interview with L. Mosala, conducted by Masilonyane Lefuo, Bloemfontein, 19 October 2017.

³¹⁴ Interview with S. Mokoena, conducted by Masilonyane Lefuo, Bloemfontein, 24 June 2018.

in Qwaqwa, University of the North by then, Masia Ramothibe from Heilbron, Dick Soga from Oppenheimer Park, Welkom, Charles Mabitsela from Zamdela and Ndweni from Kroonstad.³¹⁵

On 9 September 1992, AZAPO was invited to attend a meeting, organized by the National Education Conference. According to Letebele Mosala, the aim was to form a regional structure. Sakhiwo Belot represented the ANC, Mosala and Belot represented AZAPO, South African Democratic Teachers Union (SADTU) was represented by Fani Sithole, and National Education Crisis Committee (NECC) was represented by Thabo Masukela. All structures represented, discussed the memorandum from the National Educational Conference, 'Code of Conduct, Value and Principles'. The aim was to formalize an all-inclusive participation from broader liberation movements, regarding the educational status of South Africa, intending to decolonise it.³¹⁶

4.4 Conclusion

Obliteration and annihilation of BCM, concatenated with its ideology of BC philosophy, spearheaded later by the AZAPO, was not only a systematic national political agenda engendered by the erstwhile South African apartheid regime's attenuation effort on the organisation nationally. However, its cavalier and heinous political trajectory was also aimed at exterminating the philosophy of BCM from its nascent or inchoating stage in the provincial and local political landscape.

This chapter showed that contrary to other historians' observation of SA being in a state of blood spill, many people were detained, tortured, subjected to suffocation, electric shocks, sleep deprivation, killed brutally by bombing and death in detention, however, for AZAPO activists in Mangaung there was hope for the future of this country, despite the routine open collusion at the time, which gave the security police carte blanche to continue torturing political detainees and activists with impunity. This, the chapter explicitly shows, never deterred the spirit of resilience and determination of the youth of the 1980s, not only in Mangaung, but also in the rest of the country. In Mangaung, despite the sentencing to Robben Island of people like Qithi, followed by Gift Duma and Modise Phekonyane, it never dampened their revolutionary spirit of fighting for the country's political freedom and sacrificing their youthful years. Against all odds of police

³¹⁵ Interview with Mosala.

³¹⁶ *Ibid.*

brutality and infiltration by police informers, several meetings were held to revivify AZAPO in Mangaung. For BCM, the apartheid military junta was nothing but purgatory.

The intentions of those who spearheaded the formation of AZAPO provincially and locally, were destined to complete the organising and recruitment campaign methodologically and was also to be defined in a palpable and precise way. Qithi's experience from Robben Island, and his political education was the summing up of experience, accuracy of observation, illuminated by a profound suffused philosophical world-conception and a rich knowledge of historical trajectory. Therefore, the immanent task was to establish an organisation. Contacts with comrades from Gauteng were to be established for the acquisition of AZAPO's Constitution and the Black Consciousness Movement's Political Programme, for the induction of new members. It was also emphasized that AZAPO was a liberation movement with clear intentions to overthrow of the apartheid regime and replace it with a socialist state.

CHAPTER FIVE :

AZANIAN PEOPLE’S ORGANIZATION (AZAPO) AND THE EXPERIENCES OF BLOEMFONTEIN (MANGAUNG) POLITICAL ACTIVISTS

5.1 Introduction

Over the years, scholars and non-scholars of history attempted to write the history of the liberation struggle, and in their many studies have alluded to the role played by the African National Congress (ANC), the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania (PAC), and the Black Consciousness Movement (BCM), but little attention was given to AZAPO. The reasons for this lacuna are documented in chapter one of this study. The body of knowledge generated, tends to undermine the role of AZAPO, as it was on many occasions eclipsed by the activities of others, which received scholarly attention. This chapter tries to break away from the tradition of writing history of the well-known organisations, but attempts to document the history of AZAPO, particularly in the Free State and Mangaung, using a ‘bottom-up’ approach. As to the methodology, the chapter is based primarily on oral history interviews with former students, members of AZAPO in general and those who were at the leadership level. As a political activist in his own right, the researcher’s voice is hereby highlighted.

On the question of the importance of life history interviews, Jeremy Seekings makes the following important observation: ‘Accounts of protests and struggle found in official state documents under apartheid and in the post-apartheid period pose significant challenges for researchers. The state, its judicial arms and some media often propagated the idea that the mass resistance to apartheid, local government and ultimately the regime as a whole, was the creation of a few agitators or conspirators located in the ANC and its aligned groupings. Such activists were given delineations, such as terrorists or communists’.³¹⁷ This shows that while acknowledging the usefulness of the official government documents and certain media reports, they should be treated with caution. To counter their biasness, and as for this study, conducting oral interviews proved to be worthwhile in closing this academic gap. In addition to the above, newspaper clippings were considered and used as historical sources.

³¹⁷ J. Seekings, *South Africa’s Townships 1980-1991: An Annotated Bibliography*, Stellenbosch Research Unit for Sociology of Development, University of Stellenbosch, 1992.

The chapter is embedded within the policies of AZAPO, explained as follows: AZAPO is a movement representing all the oppressed and exploited people in their struggle for national, social and economic liberation; Blacks are all those people, who in this country are politically oppressed, socially degraded, and economically exploited as a group (Africans, Coloureds and Indians) and who identify together as one oppressed people in a common struggle against national oppression, economic exploitation and social degradation; and that AZAPO totally rejects racism. The organisation explained that its definition of 'Black' is not based on skin colour, texture of hair, colour of eyes, etc. It maintained that 'Blacks are all oppressed and exploited people who are prepared to stand up and fight the racist capitalist ruling class. Based on our definition of Black, puppets and sell-outs, like Rajbansi, Matanzima, Sebe, Hendrikse, informers, etc, are classified 'non-white' and are automatically excluded from membership of AZAPO.³¹⁸

5.2 Contextualizing AZAPO's activists' stories in Mangaung

As mentioned in the previous chapter, AZAPO was at the forefront of the student struggle in Bloemfontein and Mangaung as early as after its establishment in 1978. Despite the dearth of sources on this topic, there is *Res ipsa loquiter*, based on interviews and oral history that information on AZAPO's political activism was obfuscated with equivocation, only for political expediency. In this chapter, the focus is on the stories as told by AZAPO activists and those who directly or indirectly contributed to the development of the organisation. To understand this in a proper political sequence, it is important to highlight that the organisation was not made only prominent by those who supported it, others who were not members too had stories to tell. Some of the stories are in the public domain as conducted long before this study was hatched by the Bloemfontein Archives personnel. Other snippets of their experiences, which became important for this chapter were found in the erstwhile local newspaper, *The Friend*. The researcher focused also on this newspaper for the following reasons: it had appealing historical evidence, consisting of oral testimonies, eyewitness accounts, and newspaper archives of the local news.

This newspaper was the main one for Africans. When reading stories in this newspaper, they covered local political news, despite being managed by Whites. It is important therefore to note

³¹⁸ Wits Historical Papers, 'AZAPO Pamphlet: Viva AZAPO', File A2618-Cg-1-01, p. 1. See also 'AZAPO: Pamphlet: AZAPO The People's Movement'. File 12618-C-Cg-Cg1-Cg1.2, p.1.

the abuse and racist humiliation of these journalists whose White editors censored their original submissions. The journalists, mainly those freelancing, were Black. It should be noted that during this period, by law, White journalists were barred from entering African townships. Therefore, White journalists could not obtain eyewitness accounts of the local politics. The political trajectory of participants will not be of them being conduit, but the voices will be apposite and resolute, and not only chronicle their individual involvement in the national struggle for liberation through AZAPO. Although without any reference to AZAPO, but to the period leading to the Soweto Uprising, who interpretatively had a bearing on the formation of AZAPO, James Saunders noted that Black journalists felt that stories about the Soweto Uprising were butchered by the politically biased White editors. Patrick Laurence of the *Rand Daily Mail* used to say: ‘Blacks were less inclined to question eyewitness accounts and were more likely to give credibility to the police brutality. White reporters in supervisory positions were more critical’.³¹⁹

This section of the chapter uses life-history interviews with a select group of AZAPO activists in Mangaung in pursuit of the liberation struggle in South Africa (SA). These interviews entail descriptions of events and processes and opinions on key issues captured in their own words. In doing so, it elevates the stories of the contributions of some key, and some unknown AZAPO actors in the struggle for freedom. Here the researcher used his in-depth expertise of the country’s histories of the liberation struggle to draw out relevant information from the interviewees. However, it should be noted that this chapter cannot claim to be truly representative, given the large underground activities of AZAPO and the wide variety of events and processes that characterised the organisation’s history. The interviewees identified and consulted, their stories are meant to fill gaps or provide more insight into some well-known, as well as controversial issues in the literature about AZAPO. The interviewees’ narratives come in a form of interpretation of the developments within AZAPO, as well as through direct and verbatim quotes, whereby emphasis was needed. In view of the above, three pertinent questions come to the fore. How the word of mouth assisted in the mobilisation of support for AZAPO? Did the word of mouth reinforce, awaken and develop the political, as well as the intellectual potential of those who supported AZAPO? Did the coming of AZAPO into the political scene promote values linked to

³¹⁹ For more information on this see S.M. Ndlovu, *The Soweto Uprisings: Counter-Memories of June 1976: Updated edition with new content* (Johannesburg: Picador Africa, 2017), pp. xxiv-xxv.

establishing a strong and Black based organisation? Thus, this chapter through the oral testimonies attempts to provide answers to the above-mentioned questions.

5.3 Political influence and circumstances detailing the arrests of political activists in Mangaung: Through the eyes of AZAPO's activists

As early as 1975, Lereko High School in Rocklands (Mangaung) was visited by Morris Isaacson High School. Ditaba Mokgosi recalls that despite the visit being to engage on different sporting codes, some of the students from both institutions discussed politics. Some discussions revolved around the death of Abram Tiro, the significance of the Black People's Convention (BPC); South African Students Organization (SASO); South African Students Movement (SASM), politics and the entire Bantu Education system. This visit animated Lereko students and urged them to carry the banner of struggle for liberation. With the political discussions having taken place in 1975, real activism happened after the Soweto Uprising. On 27 October 1977, the Mocwedi School Board's office was gutted by fire. The following students were accused of having started that fire: Thenge Moadira, Morena Matseletsele, Ditaba Mokgosi (who is said to have been the one torching the offices), Modise Phekonyane, Papi Kgotseng, Luckyboy Maloisane (who died in Lesotho in 1982) and Sekgopi Malebo. Both Morena Matseletsele and Modise Phekonyane were sentenced respectively to five years imprisonment to Robben Island, while Thenge Moadira spent only one year on Robben Island.³²⁰

In an interview with Mokgosi, he alluded to the fact that the delegation of students was also sent to Brandfort to meet with Winnie Mandela to solicit political advice and support after the death of Papi Makotoko, but on hearing that they were talking of Azania and BC philosophy, Winnie reprimanded them and referred to them as agents of apartheid.³²¹ Masilonyane Lefuo has the following to say on this:

There was a student uprising. There were uprisings and when they were pursued by police, he (Papi Makotoko) was shot, and he died. Now they decided to organize a tombstone ... a burial for Papi Makotoko. They went to Winnie Mandela. Now one guy was released from Robben Island by the name of Jani Mohapi... Jani was the brother to White Mohapi. He

³²⁰ Interview with D. Mokgosi, conducted by Masilonyane Lefuo, Bloemfontein, 20 August 2018.

³²¹ *Ibid.*

was from Turf and then he was arrested and went to Robben Island. After being released, he started to interact with Winnie Madikizela-Mandela in Brandfort. Now the likes of Gauta, Gregory, and all the executive committee went to Winnie Mandela and told her what was happening. They told her that one learner was shot and had passed on and we need to organize a big funeral for that boy. Then my brother, Gauta, said - because he was collecting money from businesspeople so that he can have the tombstone and the program - he proposed to Mrs Winnie that we are going to write 'One Azania, One Nation', [on the tombstone]. It was then where Winnie asked him 'what do you understand about Azania'? And he said to me he was shocked, because he was not ... he didn't know because everyone was talking about 'One Azania, One Nation'. So, Winnie and ... I think the ANC people were very much afraid of this phenomenon of Black Consciousness Movement, because it was coming up very strongly and it was intimidating the former political space, which was occupied by the ANC and the PAC. So, they didn't want anyone to really understand and, innocently, if you talk about Azania then you'll be immediately associated with AZAPO. And others were not even aware, because it was just 'Hey man, I read from the newspaper and saw One Azania, One Nation and you know Steve Biko, the Black power and that situation'. Then that's where the misunderstanding came between himself (Gauta) and Winnie Mandela. But later he was arrested. And then the tombstone of Makotoko was written 'One voice, One nation'.³²²

Lefuo further explains:

Instead of One Azania? But later it was changed and then the emblem of COSAS ... What I'm trying to say is that all these students were not aware of what do you mean by Black Consciousness, what is this Azania. It was just a euphoria, it's a struggle and we were there and then it was Black power at school, and we've been told about names like Nnamdi Azikiwe, Jomo Kenyatta, you know Mao Zedong and those things started to emerge. Garibaldi, and the French revolution was discussed. Then people were really inspired to be actively involved in the struggle for liberation. But in fact, they never understood the dynamics involved in terms of the difference between the BCM, ANC and PAC, especially in particular the BCM and ANC. Then he came back, and he was telling us he proposed this thing of 'One Azania! One Nation' and I was called to order by Winnie Mandela to never come to her place and talk about that. It was then that he started to understand that oh that there is a difference, that this one is for that one and oh this one stands for the BCM

³²² Interview with M.E. Lefuo, conducted by Tshepo Moloi, Bloemfontein, 30 September 2023.

and this one for the ANC. It was then, again, at our place, I remember his name Tosh - nickname was Tosh - and I think I can find the name [looking through his files]. They met with Winnie Mandela and thereafter they met with Ntate Caleb Motshabi. Caleb Motshabi was from Robben Island and was a member of Mkhonto we Sizwe (MK). Gauta Lefuo, Tosh Thlomelang and Gregory Nthatisi, together with Simphiwe Mthimkulu, were a well-organized structure of COSAS. Now upon meeting Winnie Mandela, they were introduced to the ANC underground operations and then recruited students from as far as Northern Cape, Eastern Cape, Western Cape Province and that's where they met with Simphiwe Mthimkhulu. But this Thlomelang was killed by the UNITA forces in Angola.³²³

According to Gregory Nthatisi, towards the end of 1977, the entire Mangaung Township was highly politicised, and schooling was intermittently disrupted with the end of the year exams being disrupted and boycotted. Pupils were inspired by the BC philosophy. The apartheid regime unapologetically brought in the strong arm of the SADF to assist the police to quell the unrests, which they viewed were out of control by then. Thus, soldiers with rifles were deployed to all schools to enforce the writing of exams. To those who were politically naïve, this act by the soldiers spread the propaganda that the situation was under control and that to a certain extent, inspired the parents, who wanted their children to write exams. Many students, according to Nthatisi, became victims of police 'bullets and dogs', leading to the fatal shooting of Papi Makotoko on 21 May 1980. On 16 June 1980, another youngster, Jeremiah 'Oupa' Thulo Sejake, was shot when students were commemorating the Soweto Uprisings. In the beginning of 1978, those who were hunted by the police, skipped the country into exile to Lesotho, Botswana, Swaziland, Angola, Zambia, Zimbabwe and Mozambique to join the ANC and PAC, respectively.³²⁴

According to Solly Sejake, his brother, Jeremiah Thulo Sejake, was born on 10 May 1958 in Bloemfontein and was the second child of Mr and Mrs Sejake. On the Commemoration Day, 16 June 1980, he was shot while running away from the police. He was taken to Pelonomi Hospital where he was operated on and died on 19 June 1980.³²⁵ Zachariah Sekoere confirmed that as early as 1979, Thulo Sejake used to frequent Soweto and attended political meetings there. He was once arrested and imprisoned together with his uncle. The family believe that his death was pre-

³²³ *Ibid.*

³²⁴ Interview with G. Nthatisi, conducted by Masilonyane Lefuo, Bloemfontein, 23 January 2017.

³²⁵ Interview with S. Sejake, conducted by Masilonyane Lefuo, Bloemfontein, 14 August 2017.

meditated and planned. During the night vigil of his funeral, one policeman by the name of Sediso, was brutally stoned, stabbed and burned with petrol after he was suspected of being an informer at Mokoloko Street in Rocklands.³²⁶

Today, Thulo Sejake's name is engraved on the 'Martyr Remembrance Stone' next to Pax Nova Hall in Bochabela. The then Executive Committee of AZAPO in Mangaung in consultation with Sejake's family, organised an exhumation and reburial from Magengenene Cemetery to Hero's Acre in the same cemetery. The reburial took place on 19 August 2017.³²⁷ Some of the people who attended the reburial, included Zachariah Twayi, who contributed the coffin and tombstone pro-bono, James Letuka, General Motlhamme Morris 'Thenge' Moadira, Gauta Lefuo – General Sejake, Letebele Mosala, Judge Rampai, Mxolisi Dukwana, Masilo Koenane, Mpikeleni Duma, Tonosi 'White' Mohapi and Thabo Manyoni.³²⁸ Paying what one would call a befitting tribute to Thulo Sejake, as one of the martyrs in Mangaung and on behalf of the family, Solly Sejake indicated that Thulo was an unselfish person and always encouraged his siblings to be better people. He was also an avid athlete and good sportsman. He did everything – from half marathons, hurdles, softball and walking. That is why his running shoes and trousers (which were still in good condition) were reburied together with his remains after being killed 37 years ago by riot police.³²⁹

Back to the role played by Winnie Mandela in the politicisation of the Mangaung's youth, Lefuo's encounter with Winnie Mandela in Brandfort, opened his political consciousness as leader of the COSAS local branch. On meeting Winnie Mandela for the first time in Brandfort, Lefuo recalls:

In fact, it was after a year after being elected as chairperson. After that now we started to go to Brandfort to meet with Winnie Mandela. They were discussing issues of inductions into the ANC political tradition. We were receiving the SASPU newspaper, and we were selling it. The money we acquired from that, we were buying food for members of COSAS in Bloemfontein, because we understood that they came from poor families. So, during break we'd have this big gathering and buy lots of food and sit in one of the classrooms and eat. And that time it will be the moment also of recruiting other learners to come and join. But I was starting to move away from the politics of textbooks now to the real hard politics of joining ANC, replacing the prefect system with SRC. There was a strong

³²⁶ Interview with Z. Sekoere, conducted by Masilonyane Lefuo, Bloemfontein, 17 June 2017.

³²⁷ *Volksblad*, 19 August 2017, p 6.

³²⁸ Interview with M. Koenane, conducted by Masilonyane Lefuo, Bloemfontein, 26 September 2017.

³²⁹ *Volksblad*, 19 August 2017, p.6.

collaboration between Lereko and Vulamasango. Because we were absent from school, attending the conference in Durban, Joburg and Cape Town, sometimes for 10 days and sometimes for 7 days.³³⁰

On how he became a member of COSAS and later jumped ship to AZASM, Lefuo states:

Then they were telling me that COSAS is going to have a national congress where they are going to elect the president and then they need to get a Deputy President from Bloemfontein [Mangaung]. The possible names there were me and White Mohapi. Okay. They said that we need a Deputy President of COSAS, must come from Bloemfontein and then the eye was on myself and White Mohapi. Now one guy there in that meeting said 'Comrade Masilonyane, there's another organisation that's been formed that's called the Azanian Student Movement (AZASM) and that organization is going to contest with COSAS. I want to quote that guy verbatim. He said 'these people must be killed' [referring to AZASM members]. And I said 'No, ahh man'. Innocently so and said we can't do that. These people are Black people, and if we are having two organizations then it's fine. We are going to have two formidable forces, and we are going to fight. And he said are you not a member of AZAPO? Then I said what is AZAPO? I don't know AZAPO. Prof, I didn't know AZAPO. You are defending those people. Are you not a member of AZASM? Do you know Steve Biko? I said I don't know Steve Biko. But he said to me 'No, no, you, your language is not the language of the ANC. There is something that is happening to you. It's either you've met someone that's a member of AZAPO' - and I was not aware that Bra Fix (Fikile Qithi) is a member of AZAPO. After that meeting I went to report to the comrades and from there I went to Bra Fix. It was then he said 'Lesilo - he called me Lesilo - I will take you to Lenasia and Ladium. The BPC/SASO trialists are being released from Robben Island and I want you to go meet with those people and then I'm going to introduce you to the leadership of the Azanian Student Movement. He just said that. He never said to me I must leave COSAS. And then we went. It was me, Bra Fix, brother to Fix, Cliphis, and one guy Satch. Satch has departed. We went to Lenasia. I slept at Muntu Myeza's place in Diepkloof. It was there that I met Nkosi Molala. Then we went to Lens (Lenasia), where they were elected. I'm having that book that has the executive that was there. Then after that I went to Muntu Myeza. Muntu Myeza introduced me to the guy by the name of Kabelo Lengane. He was the President of the Azanian Student Movement. And I came back and met with other members of the executive of COSAS, and then we delinked, and I took them

³³⁰ *Ibid.*

to bra Fix. And that's where we defined and established the AZASM in Bloemfontein... We went to Cape Town, Western Cape. It was there that I was formally introduced to the leadership of AZASM and tasked with officially coming back and establishing the executive of the AZASM in Bloemfontein. When I told my brother, Mojalefa, he said to me 'You are growing in politics and for me it augurs well if in our house, my mother, father, sister, older brother and Mojalefa will remain as members of the ANC and see that you and Rasta are the members of the BCM. It's fine'. But that's when we started to establish AZASM and I was elected secretary general, and Rasta became the chairperson. And after that, we met with Letebele Mosala, younger brother to Itumeleng Mosala, Kgotsa Mokhele and Muntu Myeza came also. Peace Duna came, Reverend Mafonkosi came. Pandelani Nefolovhodwe came here.³³¹

At Lereko High School, teachers who conscientized students, were James 'Jimmy' Letuka and Moses Lesia. Having studied at Turfloop University in the late 1960s, he used to tell students about his encounter with Steve Biko, while he was a member of SASO at the institution. He encouraged students to read widely, including newspapers to broaden their view of political understanding. He encouraged parents to support students in their demand for the scrapping of Afrikaans as a medium of instruction. Letuka commanded respect in the community. Due to this, he later became a member of Black Parents Education Support Committee (BPESC) and member of the NECC in Mangaung.³³²

In an interview conducted with Letuka by Masilonyane Lefuo, the former indicated that he went to Turfloop in January 1966 and registered for a B.A. Degree and University Education Diploma (UED). On arrival there, he became a member of the SASO immediately after the death of Abram Tiro. He also became actively involved in the SRC. As a SASO member, he was able to meet and engage with leaders, such as Steve Biko, Harry Nengwekhulu (The Piper) and Phandelani Nefolovhodwe. Nengwekhulu was known as The Piper, because he was always smoking a pipe. At Turfloop, his room was called 'The Basic Necessities', because it consisted only of several books, a table and chair, bed, facecloth, roll-on and face cream and a few clothes. Nengwekhulu was omniscient and eschew and an inveterate student, exhibiting a personality imbued with equanimity. Letuka further alluded that for political discussions, they divided themselves into two

³³¹ Interview with Lefuo.

³³² Interview with S.M. Serame, conducted by Masilonyane Lefuo, Bloemfontein, 04 January 2007.

streams. One stream focussed on countries, which were liberated and became independent and had good qualities to be learned from the former colonial masters. The second stream looked at what should be avoided in case freedom was attained in SA.³³³ Letuka always referred to their indefatigable and veritable obsession to learn and keep on learning. In an interview with him, he kept on mentioning Lenin's book entitled, *Lenin and the Cultural Revolution*, where the author refers to the problems of inheritance. Quoting from it, he said students from his university days were constantly being reminded on using what the apartheid would leave behind after freedom for the Black masses to build a new society (a socialist society) and not follow in the footsteps of other African leaders of being greedy. He argued that the assimilation must therefore be of the African unity and must retain that which is 'most valuable'.³³⁴

On the death of Tiro and what became known as the Tiro Affair, the *City Press* newspaper lamented that although the passing on of Tiro was received with mixed feelings, this set off the evolution of the struggle against apartheid to other levels. The apartheid regime was exposed and criticised by the international world.³³⁵ However, the more immediate consequence of the Tiro Affair was that it provided the backdrop to the seminar of June 1972, SASO Annual General Student Council (GSC), at St Peter's Seminary in Hammanskraal, which underscored the growing militancy among students of the time.³³⁶ On 22 March 1998, Tiro was re-buried at his birth place of Dinokana. The encomium of Tiro was given by the former president of AZAPO, Mosibudi Mangena, and the provincial government of the North-West was represented by Premier Popo Molefe. In Masilonyane Lefuo's interview with Mpikeleni Duma, the latter indicated that Tiro has two burial sites. Parts of his body were left in the original grave in Botswana, and the other remaining parts of his body were repatriated back to SA for re-burial. However, this information could not be corroborated. Duma was also instrumental and played a key pivotal role in making sure that the writing of Tiro's biography became a success. On page 221, the author of Tiro's biography acknowledges Duma's contribution in making sure that he connected him with relevant people and to get the project started.³³⁷

³³³ Interview with J. Letuka, conducted by Masilonyane Lefuo, Bloemfontein, 15 December 2022.

³³⁴ *Ibid.*

³³⁵ *City Press*, 18 August 2019, p. 6.

³³⁶ *Ibid.*

³³⁷ Interview with M. Duma, conducted by Masilonyane Lefuo, 22 February 2020.

Masilonyane Lefuo was privileged to have attended Tiro's re-burial, together with Bosman and Lekaota Ditsheho from Mangaung. Many people across the country, including former students of Turfloop, graced the gathering. Regarding Tiro's assassination, no one came forward to apply for amnesty. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) could not reach a 'conclusive finding' but indicated that the 'Z-Squad' of the Bureau for State Security (BSS) was responsible for his assassination. The Commission concluded that, in all probability, Tiro's death was the result of the work of Dries Verwey and Mike Kuhn, members of the 'Z-Squad', the operational arm of BOSS. The Commission further found that the former state and the Minister of Law and Order were responsible for the assassination. The Government of South Africa stated categorically that it was not responsible for the murder of Tiro, and it accordingly rejected any accusation of complicity.³³⁸ In an interview with Gaongalelwe Tiro, he stated that Tiro was a man of profound thought, gifted and intelligent. He immersed himself in the inchoative stages of the philosophy of BC and actively participated in the political activities of SASO. He had this sleight of hand quality that would make him a good organizer of SASO. He embodied characteristics of a true revolutionary - truthfulness, heroic, self-sacrificial, warrior for truth and fought against repression, oppression and injustices.³³⁹

One of the leaders of AZAPO at the later stage in Mangaung, Ike Tshitlho, recalls that he was introduced into politics by default. He said it was around 1972, while a student at Sehunelo High School, Winkie Direko, then teacher at the school, requested him to collect the school's post from the Batho Post Office. From the collected post, it emerged that Direko was receiving SASO epistolary material, coming from Durban and Transvaal, respectively. According to Xolela Mangcu, Direko was President of the University Christian Movement (UCM) in 1971, who once, from this organisation, donated R 75 000 to SASO.³⁴⁰

Because of the curiosity in Tshitlho, he opened some of the material and discovered that it was SASO's. Reading the material, he became ignited by the articles published by SASO and that appealed to his conscience as he continued reading about the BC philosophy. Unlike many of his peers, he was not introduced to BC through discussion with others, but because he became a self-

³³⁸ G. Tiro, *Parcel of Death: The Biography of Onkgopotse Abram Tiro*, p. 199.

³³⁹ Interview with G. Tiro, conducted by Masilonyane Lefuo, 26 May 2020.

³⁴⁰ X. Mangcu, *Biko: A Biography* (Tafelberg: Cape Town, 2012), p. 172. For more information on Winkie Direko, see also C. Twala and L. Barnard, 'Winkie Direko – A political leader in her own right?', *Journal for Contemporary History*, 22(3), 2003, pp. 134-151.

taught student of the philosophy. When discussing the BC with his peers, he appeared to be knowledgeable, although at the elementary level.³⁴¹

On 23 August 1976, 14 students from Ihobe Primary School in Rocklands were detained by the security police, because of the riots that erupted at the school and disturbed other surrounding schools. They were held under the Criminal Procedures Act, and not under any of the security regulations. The violence started shortly after 9:45 AM when students started stoning the school buildings and breaking windows in four classrooms and the staffroom. The stoning was sparked off by the detention of two pupils in connection with an alleged attempt to burn down the school on the Friday. Four classrooms were sprinkled with petrol, and one set alight, but the fire was put out by the principal and staff of the neighbouring Ikwezi Primary School.³⁴²

The issue of pupils embarking on a rampage and destroying what they associated with the apartheid regime, continued for the better part of 1976. On 23 September 1976, four pupils from Ihobe Higher Primary School appeared before Justice, C.M.S. Brink and two assessors in the Supreme Court on a charge of sabotage. They were Alfred Qithi and Andrew Linda. The names of the four were not disclosed as they were under the age of 18. A. Erasmus SC, the Deputy Attorney-General, represented the regime, whilst P.B. Hancke appeared *Pro Deo* for the four accused.³⁴³

All four were accused of sabotage and attempts to burn down the school, an incident that happened on 20 August 1976. They were accused of pouring petrol over the school benches and setting them alight. All of them initially pleaded not guilty to the charge of sabotage when the hearing started. But later, during the trial, Qithi pleaded guilty to sabotage and the other three pleaded guilty to arson. Qithi, being the leader of the group and because he had plead guilty to sabotage, was sentenced to five years imprisonment on Robben Island. To show the harshness of his sentence, no part of it was suspended. The others' sentences were suspended and partly suspended.

According to *The Friend* newspaper, the first school to be burned in Mangaung was Marang Primary School. Pupils gave the Black power salute (clenched fist) when they arrived at the school, where two classrooms and a storeroom had been damaged by fire on 26 July 1976.³⁴⁴ Several children were arrested by the Security Police and were detained at Batho Police Station, and this

³⁴¹ Interview with I. Tshitlho, conducted by Masilonyane Lefuo, Bloemfontein, 30 February 2017.

³⁴² *The Friend*, 23 September 1976, p. 3.

³⁴³ *Ibid.*, 28 September 1976, p. 3.

³⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 1.

was according to J. Sibisi, member of the Bantu Urban Council (BUC). According to further reports of Colonel J. van der Merwe, officer commanding the Security Branch in Mangaung, parents were not allowed to see their children, but the items they brought were to be handed over to them.³⁴⁵

On 20 October 1977, Form 2 students at Ikaelelo Junior Secondary School in Kagisanong refused to enter classes to write their final-year examination, but agreed after they were addressed by their principal, Lesley Mancoe. They were responding to a mass country ban of the BC and two black newspapers, namely, *The World* and *Rand Daily Mail*.³⁴⁶ The Mocwedi School Board office was also gutted by fire on 27 October 1977 as the pupils held a protest march against Bantu Education and a boycott of the year-end examination. The march started outside Sehunelo High School after Morning Prayer assembly, and was joined by the Lereko High School, carrying placards, which read 'Don't shoot. There are no terrorists here'.³⁴⁷

Another student activist within COSAS in Mangaung was White Mohapi. His role and political influence could not be left unnoticed by those around him and that attracted the attention of the police, as he was constantly harassed. His recollection of his activism within COSAS structures is as follows:

I had my brother Janie, who was a student at then Turfloop, along the way, because of his student activism at Turfloop, he was expelled. I took tune from many things that he was doing. He partly influenced my political understanding and political awareness... Let me say before Lereko High School, let me start with Maboloka. When one was at Maboloka, it was during the time when there were uprisings around, starting from 1977. In my last interview I said it was in 1978, but in actual fact it was in 1977. Situations that were prevailing around Bloemfontein had their own influence on one's political understanding. As such, Maboloka was one of those schools that were not inclined into any activism. When many of the high schools and primaries were being closed by students, Maboloka was one school where we would always be at school. One started to question a lot of things around as to why this school was continuing, while other students are involved in the struggle. In a way we started to organize ourselves at Maboloka. In actual fact, I instigated the students that they must start an uprising, because a lot of other schools were out. One day we cut

³⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁴⁶ Interview with L. Mosala, conducted by Masilonyane Lefuo, Bloemfontein, 19 October 2017.

³⁴⁷ *The Friend*, 28 September 1976, p. 2.

off the telephone line and took those students out of the school. It was also during the time of exams whereby one morning we were all going to sit for exams, but I kept on telling other students that in no way that we could write while other schools were not writing. I remember telling my classmates that they should be alert that at any moment other people might come to chase them out of classes. I told them that they would rather support the struggle. Some pupils at that time couldn't understand what I was talking about, but it happened. Immediately when we were starting with the exams, a group of students from Sehunelo came marching and a lot of kids ran away. That is what I told them was going to happen, because I knew from the onset that we were going to be attacked. That is where I gradually started to understand politics and uprisings the way they were during that time. That mainly happened in 1979, because in 1980, I think I was doing Standard 6, where Standard 6 was moved to the high schools. I went to Lereko. I did my Standard 6 at Lereko High School... What I remember very well was that there was a student movement, which was called the Bloemfontein Student Organization that was organizing students around Bloemfontein. If I remember well, when people started recruiting us and organizing us, they used to organize us under that student movement. Later, immediately out of that, student leaders started talking about COSAS as a student movement that was established in 1979. Gradually people moved from the Bloemfontein Student Organization to COSAS as an organization... Because high school students were the ones who were at the forefront of the student struggle, they recruited mainly from the high schools, but schools like Legae Primary School played a role in as far as student politics were concerned. The influence of student activism from Legae Primary School influenced many other high schools around. The recruitment in terms of leadership was across the board. When they are recruited, they would in fact take students outside the classrooms, across all schools, that is primary and high schools. I think by then it was to raise political consciousness amongst students. We should not forget that before then, there were political organizations like AZAPO that existed and the Black Consciousness Movement. The ideology mainly of the Bloemfontein Student Organization was mainly Black Consciousness orientated. The consciousness part of it was not a priority; it was not seen as an organizing factor. What was important then, was organizing students based on the problems that they faced at high school level... I think through history and what we were told was that there was a teacher there [at Legae Primary School] Mr Sejanamane, who was politically involved in the Black Consciousness Movement, if I am not mistaken. He played his role in trying to organize students and organizing activities around the BC and as such he was detained by the Security Branch.

When he was detained by the SB, the Legae school-going kids decided that they were going to demonstrate and protest his detention. One of the first things that they did, they realized that to achieve this, they had to go and influence and organize other schools to support them. The first school that they organized or went to was Sehunelo High School.³⁴⁸

About his political activism at Lereko High School, Mohapi alluded:

My schooling years at Lereko, as I said, started in 1980 and it was during that year when student politics were boiling. Firstly, I was formally recruited into student's organization at Lereko. I was recruited by Kamanda Thapeli, a comrade who later died here in Bloemfontein. He had a shoot-out with the police. He had later joined MK. It was himself and Jomo Lefuo who cleaned out from class to class, recruiting students and explaining the importance of having the Student Representative Councils and the need to attend meetings. Since I was a bit politically conscious, because of my activism at Maboloka, it was easier for me to understand and follow suit. When they informed me about that, I just followed and attended their meetings. At that time if one can recall very well, Lereko was next to Sehunelo. Both schools were very active in student politics. It was so easy to interact as students. One of the things in the whole of activism in Lereko and Sehunelo, was the breaking down of the barrier between those two schools. There was an asbestos fence that separated the two schools but both students at the two schools decided on destroying that barrier to make their movement easy to cross to the other side. Because of that political consciousness of students, one grew up in 1980 being organized and started taking part in some activities. 1980 was the same year where one started to experience the hardships or the harassment of the police. What happened in 1980 was that one student was killed by the police that is Papi Makotoko. I think before Papi Makotoko, there was one girl that was killed by the by the police, but her death was never publicized so much. The person that I knew was Papi Makotoko and after him it was Sejake, who was also killed by the police. In the night vigil of Sejake we attended as students. At about 10 o'clock in the evening after the prayer service, one of the student leaders then announced that all students should remain behind, because the leadership wanted to speak to them, and we remained. What happened thereafter was that one person was pointed out to be an informer.³⁴⁹

³⁴⁸ Interview with W. Mohapi, conducted by Chitja Twala, Bloemfontein, 18 January 2008 [Courtesy of the interview availed to me by Chitja Twala].

³⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

Mohapi experienced ill-treated by the police after his arrest:

Yes, in the same gathering. When that person was pointed out, he was then attacked. Later, the following day or a few days after the attack of that person, I was one of the students that were picked-up from their respective homes by the police. By then I think I was about 14 years old. When the police came to my home, as usual they would wake up everybody and they said they wanted Tonosi Mohapi. Tonosi is my nickname. Innocently, I stood up and said: 'It's me'. They indicated that they had come to pick me up. I remember getting out of the room to the police van. When I was standing there, my grandmother was talking to this one policeman, the other policeman came to me and said: 'Go and sleep, what do you want here'. I was tiny; he never thought I was the person they were looking for. The other one said 'No, no, he is the one we are looking for'. I had to get into the van [car] and they moved around searching for other students. They went looking for Oupa Mokele. They went to his home, but he was not there. Of course, they could not get other people, so they took me to Batho Police Station. That was one bad experience that one came across for the first time, but one went through that. On my arrival at Batho Police Station, there was one policeman, Majavu, a bit old skinny Black policeman. He was a very rude and cruel type of person. When I got out of the van, he lashed on me. He gave me a very hot clap. I was taken into one of the offices there. I think the police that were involved there were six and they beat a hell out of me. I think it took them 45 minutes first half if I may call it that way, 45 minutes beating me up and in the process of doing that they produced a hand-written document. They asked me as to whether can I read Tswana and I responded by saying 'Yes, I don't have any problem'. By then my face was swollen and I had blood all over. Then they took out that statement and they said I must read it. The statement was allegedly from Juksie Bojang. He was not staying far from my home. It was a person that I knew as a student leader at Sehunelo and we were playing for the same club, called Brilliant Swallows. From my home to his home, I think it's only about 400m away. When they took out that statement, it was a statement purported to have been written by Juksie. In the statement he mentioned his full name and his address. He mentioned that on a particular day when that informer who was a policeman was attacked...Let me put it the way it was written. He said 'I am Duke Ellington Bojang, I know Tonosi Mohapi. On the day of the attack of a policeman, Tonosi Mohapi was there. I saw him, he was kicking that policeman. He went to his home to take paraffin, which he poured on the policeman'. In a nutshell he was implicating me that I was part of that. After that they also put a pen and paper in front of me and said I must write what I knew Juksie did on that day. I said to them 'I did not do

anything, and I know nothing about that'. They kept on beating me. At one stage I requested them to go to the toilet. I was accompanied by one policeman. When I was in the toilet, this Black policeman said to me 'You know White, you see I am beating you like all of them, don't make a mistake. Never reveal anything, because if you do that, you are going to be in trouble'. He said to me 'I am going to beat you like them, but I am telling you, don't reveal anything'.³⁵⁰

The above story by Mohapi was not an isolated one, as many other activists experienced the same treatment metered out by the police upon their arrest. Ike Moroe reminisces of the incidents following the death of Biko in September 1977. The commemoration of Steve Biko's death, which mainly were held at St Rose Church in Mangaung, exposed many leaders of BC aligned organisations to the Special Branch (SB) police unit. For such activities, such leaders were arrested in attempts to have a blanket clampdown on their activities by the apartheid regime and many leaders of BC and later AZAPO were arrested. He recalls the name of a place in the central business district in Bloemfontein, which was used as a place of torture for political activists. The place was called Fountain Building. The building's fourth floor was called 'violent streets' and allegedly splashed with blood all over its corridor walls. Methods of interrogation and torture, included poisoned food given to the detainees, electrocution (to their private parts), suffocation using motor tyre tubes, leading to severe hypoxia, physical beating, sometimes to death and disappearance of political activists.³⁵¹

Another activist, Mbole Mkhusangwe, also suffered the same fate at the hands of the police, while detained at the Bayswater Police Station. This continued when taken to Fountain building. In attempts to extract the truth from her, she was subjected to brutal physical beatings at Fountain. She was deprived of sleeping, and not allowed to wash herself, never provided with female hygiene materials, for example, sanitary pads, and was forced to stand in one position for more than five days and had to relieve herself in a dirty bathroom. To break her spirit, she was also starved and allowed to eat only in the morning. The 'menu' was the same for all her detention days, made up of pap and coffee. On some days she was offered only bread with 'phuzamandla' (a powder like substance mixed with water).³⁵²

³⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

³⁵¹ *Ibid.*

³⁵² Interview with M. Mkhusangwe, conducted by Masilonyane Lefuo, Bloemfontein, 10 January 2018.

This notorious and infamous Fountain building is situated at the intersection between Aliwal Street and Fountain Street. It is directly opposite to the High Court building and the building now occupied by the National Prosecution Authority (NPA). The SB officials, who were well known for torturing political activists, were Captains Erasmus and Swanepoel. They would torture and beat activists with a high level of impunity, sending shock waves of frenzy and fear to those who would oppose the apartheid regime. By that time, according to Mkhushangwe, SA's police station or prisons were nothing more than concentration camps, and to the extreme like the Nazi camps used to exterminate the Jews and homosexuals.³⁵³

Qwaqwa and Thaba Nchu in the Free State also caught some protests from the students at the boarding schools and teachers' training colleges. *The Friend* newspaper reported that on the 21st June 1976, unrest broke out in Witsieshoek, (in the Qwaqwa Bantustan), where students of Tshiya Teachers' College ignited a laboratory with petrol causing considerable damage to property. Later, many students from Mampoi, Makabelane and Tseki boarding schools in Qwaqwa, also left the Bantustan for their homes in protest over the use of Afrikaans language as a medium of instruction in their respective schools, leading to the disruption of education in Qwaqwa.³⁵⁴ In the later years as the unrests continued in Qwaqwa schools, Dan Mofokeng is quoted by Twala in a chapter titled, *Resistance and conformity in the Qwaqwa homeland, 1975-1990* saying:

We were aware that the establishment of the Qwaqwa Police Force, who were assisted by the SAP, was aimed at suppressing people who, were perceived to be against Dikwankwetla Party. This police force was used to further the political fortunes of Mopeli and his party ... They placed a high priority on curbing all political opposition. In March 1980, I was arrested by the Qwaqwa police and taken to Tseki Police Station for interrogation, as I was suspected to have been influential in the riots that took place at Tseki High School.³⁵⁵

In Qwaqwa, the struggle was led by the likes of Casca Mokitlane, who hailed from the small town of Vredefort in the Free State. His political conscientisation started at Turfloop in 1974, where he also became a member of SASO. In 1975, he abandoned his studies and worked a stint as a site

³⁵³ *Ibid.*

³⁵⁴ *The Friend*, 20 October 1977, p. 5.

³⁵⁵ C. Twala, 'Resistance and conformity in the Qwaqwa homeland, 1975-1990', in South African Democracy Education Trust (ed.), *The Road to Democracy in South Africa*, vol. 4, Part 1, (1980-1990), (Pretoria: UNISA Press, 2010), p. 834.

clerk. In 1976 he enrolled at Tshiya College and trained as a teacher. On the riots in Qwaqwa, Mokitlane noted:

When the Soweto Uprising happened, I had just joined the Tshiya Teachers' Training College to train as a teacher... the whole institution was like a prison... For me, who was an outsider and came to Qwaqwa for studying, I did not have the opportunity to contrast what had happened before and what was happening as the result of coming into power of Dikwankwetla Party. I must say that there were schools like Makabelane High School where a number of students (mostly coming from outside Qwaqwa) were vibrant in terms of articulating political issues. As Tshiya students, particularly those who originated outside Qwaqwa, we organized a meeting on 18 June 1976 in our hostel to support the Makabelane students. The meeting was called by Oupa Tlali. To show solidarity to the Soweto students, the issue of burning down the college came into our minds, because we had identified Tshiya, rightly or wrongly as an institution of oppression... On Saturday night 19 June 1976, we managed to burn the laboratory. On Sunday 20 June, all second year JSTC students were arrested by the police and taken to the Bethlehem police station for interrogation.³⁵⁶

In another enclave of Bophuthatswana Bantustan, several students from Strydom Teachers Training College at Thaba Nchu were arrested for setting alight the school's storeroom. They were later released, but Ernest Moeng, who was 21 by then was charged with sabotage and on 24 September 1976 was sentenced to Robben Island for five years.³⁵⁷ The researcher, (Masilonyane Lefuo) in this study, recalls another incident that happened in 1978 in Mangaung when pupils disrupted schools. In an interview with Tshepo Moloi he remembers:

In 1978, when we were at Maboloka Primary School, it was at the time we saw these issues of student uprisings. There were learners (pupils?) for the first time, who came from Batho Primary School and then they were chasing learners out of the school, and they came to Maboloka. We had to run away, because we were very young, and we couldn't understand what was happening. Only to find that it was at the time when the second executive of the Azanian People's Organisation (AZAPO) was arrested in Bloemfontein. It was in the 1970s, but we were not aware at that time. So, when we arrive at Lereko (High School?) it was then that my brother, Gauta Lefuo, became actively involved in student politics. And

³⁵⁶ For more information, see Twala, 'Resistance and conformity ...', p. 837.

³⁵⁷ *The Friend.*, 20 October 1977, p. 2.

I think he became one of the founding members of COSAS (Congress of South African Students) in Bloemfontein. And another one was Oupa Mokele. When they arrive at Lereko, they were addressing us at assembly, few days down the line we started to see many students flocking into our place where we stayed. Yes, at home. And meetings were starting to be organized in that room called *lekgotlo* (backrooms). While we were sleeping in there, and we were able to eavesdrop, hear when they were singing and what they were saying and discussing. So, that is how we started being inducted and animated by political resistance in our country.³⁵⁸

About his induction and initiation into student politics, Lefuo alludes:

He (Gauta 'Jomo' Lefuo) went to Moemedi before he went to Lereko. It was there where he met two people, Jomo Makara and another one was this guy, Gregory Nthatsi. They met at Moemedi Secondary school. Then the principal was James Letuka, who was the friend of Steve Biko. At Sehunelo, then the former principal was Mme Winkie Direko, the erstwhile Premier of Free State, was also a friend to Steve Biko. Both were members of SASO (South African Student Organisation). And they would receive pamphlets and materials via the posts. Ike Tshitlho was the treasurer of the local branch of AZAPO. When I was interviewing him, he said one day he opened those letters and for the first time he was introduced to the SASO literature. Now some teachers were from Turf (Turfloop University) and Fort Hare [University, particularly from Lereko and Sehunelo, also Moemedi). They would start to talk about Black Consciousness, and Pan Africanism. Others would talk about the ANC (African National Congress). And the book that was really banned by that time was *Long Walk to Freedom*. So, they would have newspaper cuts, and have information they would use to present their lessons. They would also refer to ... I remember Mojalefa (Gauta 'Jomo' Lefuo) was talking about Nnamdi Azikiwe, Dafo Abowela (?) from Nigeria. We were not aware of these leaders by that time. The teacher who was telling them all this was Mr Lesia, and he was from Turfloop. So, he told them about the struggle in Kenya and Jomo Kenyatta. Now some of them would be having these nicknames like Jomo after those leaders. That's why we referred to them as Nnamdi Azikiwe, Dafo Abalewa (?). And my brother was Gauta 'Jomo' Lefuo as in Jomo Kenyatta; we also had Jomo Makara from the PAC (Pan Africanist Congress). It was at the time they spoke about the Italian revolution, French revolution, Guiseppe Mazzini, the other one was Garibaldi, the 'dagger of the assassins', the 'blood of the martyr', the 'tree of liberty'.

³⁵⁸ Interview with Lefuo.

Those things were starting to arise. But another thing was Radio Freedom... So, our home was a home to members of different political organizations. Jomo Makara was PAC, Mojalefe ANC, and ultimately myself and my twin brother members of AZAPO... At home there was no politics and no talk of politics. No, no, not talking about anything that was politically related. Remember at that time we never had electricity. We were using candles. And the only thing that my father was ... what he liked most was education, and my mother. Those people wanted us to be educated by any means necessary. The little they were having, they spent it to make that you go to school. They were passionate about education.³⁵⁹

In the 1980s, students and the youth of Mangaung were confronted with the growth of the Eagles Youth Club (EYC). The EYC was established in early 1980 when the Youth Activity Branch of the then Department of Cooperation and Development carried out certain programmes, targeted at the township youth, both at school and outside school levels. These so-called youth development programmes were carried out in liaison with the different township administration boards and community councils. The Department of Education and Training (DET) was also involved, because the schools were where most of the youth could be found. Therefore, in 1985, the DET was given the mandate to establish youth clubs based primarily in schools. In line with this agreement, the EYC was transferred from the Department of Cooperation and Development to the DET in the same year. Its logical establishment was to influence the youth to act in certain ways. It was not surprising that in 1986, the EYC was listed as part of the contra mobilisation strategy against the liberation movements.³⁶⁰ Du Plessis writes: ‘... This was done by organizing youth camps, leadership camps, various other activities, but the underlying motive was to discredit various organizations like the PAC and the SACP.’³⁶¹ Activities under the EYC included a range of sports, cultural events, and community service projects, aimed at promoting social and cultural development among young people. However, all these activities were often influenced by the apartheid regime’s policies and agendas. The EYC shared the apartheid regime’s vision of fighting ‘against communism’ within the township youth structures.

³⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁶⁰ I. Phillips, ‘The Eagles Youth Clubs’, in A. Minaar, I. Liebenberg and C. Schutte (eds.), *The Hidden Hand: Covert Operations in South Africa* (Pretoria: HSRC, 1994), p. 252.

³⁶¹ Du Plessis, ‘Covert Operations: Front Companies’, pp. 238-239.

Ironically, the EYC was established in 1981 under the volatile political climate of Mangaung. When it started there were only 40 young people as members. However, by 1985, it had grown and claimed the membership of 16 000 young people located in 58 townships across the Free State Province. Its growing momentum posed a threat to the liberation aligned organisations in these townships. By 1991, when the EYC ceased to exist, it had more than 600 000 members and the full-time staff component of 80 people across the country. With its initial roots in Bloemfontein, it was not surprising that the Managing Director, David Marc and his assistant, Lexon December, hailed from this city. This, in one way or another, made Bloemfontein the bastion of youth activities under the banner of the EYC.³⁶² According to Tom Lodge, for the sustainability of the EYC, the apartheid regime made a huge financial injection to the programmes. Finances were allocated in line with the membership of the club.³⁶³ On the EYC, Phindile Kunene contends:

Although created to starve off resistance against apartheid among Black youths, the state nonetheless officially denied any involvement in the operations and funding of the Eagles Club. In fact, attempts were made to create the impression that the Eagles were sponsored by private companies on the basis of the Eagle's support for its much-needed developmental programmes, targeting Black youths... Although largely predominant in the Free State, the Eagles machinery existed in other parts of the country as well... The Eagles worked closely with the apartheid security apparatus... Cooperation with the security apparatus included giving them information about organizational activity carried out by the activists and identifying political activists.³⁶⁴

According to Oupa Mokele, who was a student leader with Gauta Lefuo at Lereko High School recalls that what became known as the 'Berlin Wall' at the school, was physically demolished by Lefuo in protest of the 'ethnic' division that existed. As indicated in chapter four of this study, the leaders, including Lefuo, Jomo Makara and Gregory Nthatisi, established contacts with Winnie Mandela, who was banished to Brandfort. Both Makara and Nthatisi were students at Moemedi High School. Mokele remembers that the epoch of late 1970s was influenced by the BC philosophy although under the banner of AZAPO. The death of the BC leader, Steve Biko, also ignited the politicisation of students and youth in the area. Mokele confirmed that he attended one meeting at

³⁶² P. Kunene, 'From Apartheid to Democracy: A historical analysis of local struggles in Phomolong Township, Free State: 1985-2005', *MA Dissertation*, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, 2013, p. 149.

³⁶³ T. Lodge, 'Political corruption in South Africa' *African Affairs*, 97(387), April 1998, p. 165.

³⁶⁴ Kunene, 'From Apartheid to Democracy ...', pp. 150; 153.

Oupa Molema's place of which three of AZAPO's executive members were also in attendance, including Z. Sekoere, Kgopane Letshabo and Kenke Sejanamane. It was in this meeting where COSAS was also introduced to Mokele. Due to his political activism in Mangaung, the police were also on his heels, and he decided to go into exile in Lesotho where he met with Moroe and Chris Hani and Nkgoako Ramatlhodi, who conducted political education to the new recruits.³⁶⁵

Some of the local members of AZAPO also played an important role in other organisations outside the country. At some point, Mokele resided next to *Ha-Hoohlo* in Maseru and next to the offices of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), who was tasked with the responsibility of reporting new arrivals at the centre after being elected as house chairperson of the ANC. It was in Maseru that he was officially introduced to the ANC politics for the first time outside the country. What also complicated the matters was the absence of BC camps in the country.³⁶⁶ In his political activities, he was also tasked with the mission to infiltrate SA with MK and ANC banned materials. Inside the country, he liaised with Nthatisi and Lefuo. Due to these activities, he was arrested by the Security Branch and subsequently detained under Section 14, brutally beaten and convicted and sentenced to Robben Island for five years.³⁶⁷

When some of the teachers from Legae Primary School were arrested for inciting pupils to rise against the apartheid regime, there were riots in Mangaung. This happened immediately after the induction of the second executive committee of AZAPO in Mangaung. Kopano Letshabo, Kenke Sejanamane from Legae Primary School and Zacharia Sekoere from Batho Higher Primary School, were arrested. The three were accused of inciting pupils to demand amongst others, stationery, additional schools to quell overcrowding, qualified teachers and rejecting the use of Afrikaans as a medium of instruction in Black schools. According to Sekoere, pupils from Legae went to Batho Primary School and they were later joined by Lereko and Sehunelo High School students and marched towards Batho Police Station, holding placards with the messages 'Release Our Teachers'. As fate would tell, the police responded by using batons, teargas and dogs. Many pupils were beaten, and others were arrested and detained. The pupils were released following the acquittal of their teachers.³⁶⁸

³⁶⁵ Interview with O. Mokele, conducted by Masilonyane Lefuo, Bloemfontein, 6 November 2022.

³⁶⁶ Ibid.

³⁶⁷ Ibid.

³⁶⁸ Lefuo Collection, Interview with Zacharia Sekoere, 17/06/2018.

5.4 Conclusion

The chapter shows how members of AZAPO in the Free State, particularly in Mangaung engaged in the activities of the organisation over the years. Their testimonies are an indication that Mangaung played a huge role in the liberation struggle of SA, albeit from a lesser academically recognised organisation, such as AZAPO. The above stories provide information justifying the existence of AZAPO in the area and highlights its regional significance. Despite the achievements as highlighted here above, for the existence of AZAPO in Mangaung, the activists were faced with some challenges and political hurdles, which they needed to cross in the advancement of the liberation struggle. Information of the contestation for political space between COSAS and AZASM members in the era is something that needs further academic scrutiny. The formation of AZAPO was an indication of growing resentment amongst community members and embracing the politics of the region. The presence of AZAPO injected another political dimension to the politics of the region and Mangaung in particular. The chapter has also scrutinised what has been written about Mangaung's student politics from the newspapers. In the chapter, the researcher used these newspapers to tell the story of AZAPO, as well as corroborating what others said about the organisation in the Free State in general.

CHAPTER SIX :

CONCLUDING REMARKS AND EVALUATION OF THE STUDY

This is the final chapter of the study. It provides a summary of the entire thesis and highlights some of the key claims made throughout the study. The study's implications for future research on township politics and youth activities, using organisations, such as Azanian People's Organisation (AZAPO) are further made in this chapter. During the period under investigation in this study, the intensification of the struggle for liberation in the country became a serious challenge for the apartheid regime. When AZAPO entered the South African political scene in the late 1970s, the organization could not have foreseen the impact that it would also have on the political lives and on regional and local political dynamics and history. The study started by interrogating the existing literatures on the Black Consciousness (BC), as a philosophy, as well as tackling the Black Consciousness Movement (BCM) as an organization. This led to how AZAPO was established to continue with the BC philosophy. It situates the role of AZAPO within the broader scope of the liberation history in SA. It explores relationships between the national structures of the organisation with the local ones. In this study, AZAPO's establishment in Mangaung is a case in point. This approach and focus try to demystify views that the organization did not have stronger local branches.

Conventional narratives about the history of AZAPO in South Africa (SA) have traditionally portrayed it as having little footprints in the broader liberation historiography in the country. These narratives have been central in the construction, imagination and misrepresentation of AZAPO's identity, particularly in the regions, such as the Free State. As such, these narratives are associated with highlighting the roles of other liberation movements in the struggle for freedom in SA. Therefore, using some archival and interviews conducted with members of AZAPO and those associated with the Black Consciousness Movement (BCM), the study attempted to dispel the above one-sided narratives of the country's liberation history. It explored how AZAPO members contributed to their various capacities in the Free State region and Mangaung in particular, as well as the extent to which, how and why, these members and the like-minded activists have contributed to the process the rejection of the apartheid regime's oppressive and repressive measures.

Although this study is primarily about contentious AZAPO politics, centred in the local state, a great proportion of the findings point to the general importance of youth politicisation and political mobilisation in this equation. The study shows that it was until the mid-1970s that urbanised African youths and students exerted their influence politically and took the lead in addressing the ‘bread-and-butter’ issues in their respective townships. It is also important to note, that it was the case in many of the Free State townships, the expansion of secondary schooling in the late 1970s and early 1980s that saw school-going youth beginning to assume the frontlines in the struggle against apartheid. To justify this, Clive Glaser highlights the unique opportunity school-going youth had, as provided by being at school. Secondary schools had what Glaser refers to as a ‘unifying influence’ and students being attracted to BC philosophy, which he argues, ‘was transported through homeland universities, expelled ex-students from these institutions and to a certain extent by Christian oriented formations.’³⁶⁹

This observation by Glaser was also supported by Sifiso Mxolisi Ndlovu, who recalls that by 1974, there was an unprecedented politicisation of township schools, and such politicisation was anchored on educational grievances, with young, although few, teachers schooled in the country’s ‘homeland’ universities, such as Fort Hare, Turfloop and Zululand, often linked to SASO, provided guidance to the township students.³⁷⁰ Thus, later, AZAPO under the banner of the BC, piloted the struggle in the area by initially mobilizing the local youths, around local issues. These militant Mangaung youths, however, were first politically conscious about what was happening around them before embarking on active politics. In whatever action they took, they were careful of not alienating the elderly people in their communities, whose support they needed in the long run.

The researcher argues that the political survival of the organization depended on its local branches and leadership on the grassroots level. The first chapter of this study provided an introductory background, which was much needed to understand the entire study. Therefore, in the introduction of this study, the researcher made a bold statement that no similar study on AZAPO has been undertaken, whereby concentration was on its local structures over three decades of democracy and freedom in SA. There are no tangible reasons as to why South African political historians

³⁶⁹ C. Glaser, ‘Youth Culture and Politics in Soweto, 1958-1976’, *PhD Thesis*, Cambridge University, 1994, p. 127.

³⁷⁰ S.M. Ndlovu, ‘The Soweto Uprising: Part 1’, in South African Democracy Education Trust (ed.), *The Road to Democracy in South Africa*, vol. 6, (1990-1996), (Pretoria: UNISA Press, 2006).

failed to embark on such an academic journey in the past. Therefore, in the introduction of this study, the researcher was explicit on the need for such a study to be undertaken. One of the reasons highlighted was to dispel the myth that only a chosen few liberation movements and organizations played huge roles at the expense of others, to liberate the masses of SA. In this attempt, the researcher provided an in-depth critique of what has been written around liberation studies on SA. The study provided and focused on thematic, as well as chronological insights into the history of AZAPO, particularly in Mangaung. In doing so and to have a concise understanding of the subject matter, the influence of other AZAPO's political activities countrywide were also be looked at.

In the second chapter of this study, the researcher took the reader into the formation of BCM in SA. This was viewed as a foundational basis for the establishment of AZAPO in the later years. Here the researcher contended that for the reader to understand the philosophy behind AZAPO, one should understand its founding principles that were embedded in the BC philosophy. This chapter provided brief information for the formation of BCM in SA, which subsequently led to the establishment of AZAPO. It chartered the initial encounters of the national leaders of AZAPO in establishing it and how the country's political climate was during this period. With the coming of BC to the political scene after the banning of the African National Congress (ANC), the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) and the South African Communist Party (SACP) in 1960, the organization became a leaning one for political activists.

Through its popularity amongst students at the tertiary institutions, BC encouraged resurgence of popular politics by drawing attention to itself through appeals to 'Blackness' loyalty that had been overshadowed. It began to use its leaders, like Steve Biko, Barney Pityana and others to extend its ideological and philosophical appeal to the Black masses. BC discussions were held around the country. The chapter noted that this was not an easy task, because the apartheid regime was destined to crush any movement or organization that opposed its stance. Thus, leaders of BC were constantly intimidated and sometimes jailed for their political activities. However, this clampdown by the apartheid security force failed to dampen their political spirit in pursuit of the struggle for liberation. Here, the role of BC students from the Free State and Mangaung was highlighted. Engaging with the formation of AZAPO, these leaders set up a new purpose and trajectory for the politicisation of the masses along other political lines and ideologies. By the early 1980s, it had become clear that BC underground structures and AZAPO managed to appeal to the masses, especially those who subscribed to the BC philosophy. With the clampdown by the police, AZAPO

members and activists were directed to continue working illegally and in a conspiracy manner. Leaders provided guidance and leadership in this regard.

Due to the pressure exerted by organisations, such as AZAPO and coupled with the global economic crisis and sanctions against the regime, it was forced to think seriously about abandoning apartheid. As highlighted in this study, very little scholarly attention has been paid to the Free State, even though the region contributed immensely to the struggle with localities, such as Mangaung being at the forefront. In this regard, as shown in the study, a few studies stand out as exceptions in documenting this liberation history. However, many of these scholarly works are relatively quiet on the role played by AZAPO in the area. Amidst all the processes and challenges of launching the AZAPO branch in Mangaung, it is disappointing that to date, no academic work has been undertaken, regarding the above. Furthermore, the experiences of local AZAPO branch members have largely been absent from the country's liberation historiography. Where they have been mentioned or written about, they have essentially been projected through the lens of the national AZAPO's politics. As shown in the study, their voices were elevated to avoid them being muffled and confined to the realms of apartheid's history.

The third chapter followed the first two chapters. It unpacked the basic principles of AZAPO and how it appealed to its members. It is also important to appreciate how the organisation used BC to its advantage. Therefore, it should not be surprising when the researcher makes constant reference to the BC philosophy in attempts to unpack and advance the arguments in this chapter. Here, the researcher showed how BC had dominated extra-parliamentary politics through the first half of the 1970s. The resilience of BC members was acknowledged in this chapter, particularly to steadfast the collective ideals of Blackness and how it became a rallying point against the apartheid regime and the congress-aligned organisations. Of appreciation as explained in this chapter, is that BC had been established amidst the demoralization of the 1960s and in response prioritized struggles around culture and identity. As to how BC appealed to the workers, played a significant role in galvanizing support.

The chapter also discussed the impact of the arts and culture in giving credence to BC. In SA, it is widely known that BC and AZAPO members are wide readers and intellectuals. There are also criticisms that, due to its intellectual advantages, their members sometimes failed to convincingly articulate their stance to the masses the way other organisations would do. The fact that its

membership was open to Blacks only became another drawback to the ideals of BC and AZAPO, respectively. It was also interesting to note that BC and AZAPO used religion to appeal to the masses and embrace liberation theology. The chapter showed that through AZAPO, the organisation's constitution and policy was value driven. First, AZAPO was determined to deal with Black solidarity. Second, as the researcher alludes, Black people had to be directly involved in the liberation struggle. Thus, self-initiated programmes had to be advanced by the Black people themselves to realise their ultimate goals of liberation. Third, the re-establishment of the humanity of Black people was a priority for AZAPO. By doing so, Black people would be embarking on their own spiritual upliftment. The organization had to deal with the central problem, that of an inferiority complex amongst Black people.

Chapter four is the longest one of them all. It dealt with the establishment of AZAPO in the Free State and Mangaung. It further noted that to have formidable structures of the organisation in the Free State was not an easy task. This chapter aligned itself with what has been explained in chapter one about the geographical position on the Free State and how political structures, such as AZAPO failed to capture the media attention. With this study of AZAPO and the regional and local levels, it became clear that despite little media attention, the area was destined to be the centre of Black political activism. Its centrality and being mainly a semi-rural province, attracted a lot of attention from the apartheid security forces. Thus, political mobilisation for any organisation, particularly in the late 1970s and the end of the 1980s invited surveillance from the Special Branch (SB) Unit of the police. The chapter showed some BC and AZAPO's gains in many of the province's towns and how that influenced the latter's political activities in Mangaung. Here, the researcher went in depth explaining the roles played by different student bodies and organisations in achieving the sustainability of this organization at the local level against all repression coming from the apartheid regime. Political operations and maneuvering of the AZAPO's branches in other towns, such as Kroonstad, Hennenman, Welkom, Sasolburg, Bethlehem and Qwaqwa, proved to be significant in having a broader understanding of AZAPO's activities in the different towns and how such influenced one another.

The chapter acknowledged the fact that the development of AZAPO and its mobilisation in the area under scrutiny appeared to be slower in the Free State and Mangaung, as compared to other places around the country. Therefore, the reasons for this slow start were discussed in this chapter. The challenges experienced by the political activists, with reference to being undermined by the

underground and aboveground congress-aligned movements and the repression from the apartheid regime, were discussed. This debate on the contestation for political space is important to understand AZAPO's political activities in Mangaung during the period under discussion. While students mobilized under AZAPO also dealt with the 'bread-and-butter' issues, such as the shortage of schools, textbooks, qualified teachers, there were other critical concerns, which the students and the youth organization raised. One of the challenges was the dominance and growth of the Eagles Youth Club, which they viewed as counter-productive to their political pursuit and AZASM was at loggerheads with COSAS.

Chapter five concentrated on the life histories of AZAPO's political activists during the period under discussion. Interviews were conducted with a select group of those who played a role within BC and AZAPO political circles. These interviewees provided descriptions of events and processes on political key issues in their own words. The information provided here through the life-histories added to the existing records of the history of the struggle and gave a fuller portrait of the roles these unsung heroes and heroines played within AZAPO. This chapter elevated another important issue into the political discourse of AZAPO, namely, the innate or inherent weaknesses of the movement in Mangaung. Here it was argued that besides the repression by the apartheid regime on members of AZAPO and other political formations at the time, there were growing frustrations and dissatisfactions from the movements' members in the area. Here, the researcher dealt with the decision of the founders of AZAPO, which culminated in the emergence of a long-lasting impact and the politicization of the Black masses, not only in SA, but also outside the country with the establishment of the Black Consciousness Movement of Azania (BCMA). This foreign identity became central in determining individual and collective experiences of those in exile. The study showed from its inception the organization was geared not to just be a regional one, but to have national footprints. With the repression from the apartheid regime in the 1980s, AZAPO at national and regional levels was not spared. AZAPO continued to consolidate itself in Mangaung. The turbulent years of the 1980s and 1990s were critical with the alienation of AZAPO members by other above-ground organisations associated with the Congress Movement. This introduced intense and overt challenges for the organization.

There were criticisms leveled against AZAPO and why it did not appeal like other liberation movements to many of the South Africans. Some academics claimed that its adherence to the emphasis of Blackness was a set-back and the organization failed to read the country's political

situation and had to adjust. It needed to approach the post-1990 dispensation with long-term internal political consolidation, based on foresight, and perspicacity leadership. AZAPO must adopt constitution, imaginative, meaningful and manageable political programs, which can and must serve as basis for returning political initiative to the masses of the oppressed and exploited Black people. The programmes aim to intensify the resistance of Black people in Azania. It must recreate educational process of Black students within the context of constructive, but militant resistance to slave education.

Chapter six comes with concluding remarks on the study. It shows how the study examined the relationship between BC and AZAPO, which later also culminated to the establishment of the Mangaung branch of the organisation. From the beginning, the study provided a broader bird's-eye view of academic information on the 'neglected' history of AZAPO in the Free State and Mangaung, in particular. It focused on the political developments of AZAPO from its formation until 1994. With this study, it was clear from AZAPO's perspective that the long and tortuous road to democracy in SA was littered with countless potholes and turning points until the 1994 general democratic elections in SA. Located within the broader scope of liberation studies, the history of AZAPO deserves a place in the historiography of the country's liberation struggle. Without doubt, BC and AZAPO at some point, became forces to be reckoned with, regarding the country's struggle for liberation and made some political inroads to the Black masses against all odds, which included dealing with the repression from the apartheid regime and the congress-aligned underground movements, which wanted to dominate the political space. At the heart of this study, as shown by the researcher, was to acknowledge the immense role played by AZAPO at the national, regional and local levels. The study highlighted the successes of this at both regional and local levels, without forgetting the influences of the national leaders of the organisation. The researcher concludes by indicating that information provided in this study, is intended to inform, provoke, and showcase the role of the local structures of AZAPO, despite the contested space they operated within.

SOURCE LIST

I. PRIMARY SOURCES

A. ARCHIVAL SOURCES

Historical Papers, William Cullen Library, University of the Witwatersrand (henceforth Wits), *Azanian People's Organisation: Constitution and Policy*, AZAPO/AZASM, File, B1-28, vol. 1, No. 2, 1987, p. 2.

Historical Papers, William Cullen Library, University of the Witwatersrand (henceforth Wits), *AZAPO: Pamphlet: Viva AZAPO*, File, A2618-Cg1-1-01, p. 1.

Historical Papers, William Cullen Library, Wits, Robert Sobukwe Papers, *B. Pogrund, Research note: Cecil Ntloko (original, handwritten, (undated manuscript)*, File A2618-C150.

Historical Papers, William Cullen Library, Wits, *'Black People's Convention: Minutes of the Second Annual National Congress of the Black People's Convention held at St. Peter's Conference Centre in Hammanskraal, near Pretoria from 15th, 16th and 17th December 1973*, Karis and Gerhardt Collection.

Historical Papers, William Cullen Library, A2675, Karis Gerhart Collection: Historical and Literary Papers, University of the Witwatersrand.

Historical Papers, William Cullen Library, Wits, *South African Institute of Race Relations*, File, AD1912/239.

Historical Papers, William Cullen Library, Wits, *AZAPO: The People's Movement: AZAPO Fourth Congress, 1984, Robert Sobukwe Paper*, File, AD2618-Cg1-2.

Moore, B., 'A 1970 Theological point of view of the UCM', Historical Papers, William Cullen Library, Wits, File HPRA AD1126/A, p. 1.

National Archives of South Africa (henceforth NASA), *Whites urged to stay away*, NASA File, MJU727 MP17/2/3.

NASA, *Republic of South Africa Government Gazette*, vol. III, No. 4415, Cape Town, 25 September 1974 in File, MJU 727 MP17/2/3.

University of Cape Town Manuscripts and Archives (UCTMA) BC 586, NUSAS, B1, Congress 1969 (1) President's and Vice-President's Report.

UCTMA BC 586, NUSAS, B1, Congress 1977 (iii) Minutes of 55th Congress, UNP, 25-30 November 1977, Resolution 23/78, p. 14.

UCTMA, NUSAS, B1, Congress 1977 (iii) Minutes of 55th Congress, UNP, 25-30 November 1977, Report of Wits SRC President for 1977, p. 114.

UFH, National Heritage and Cultural Studies Centre (NAHECS), BCM(A)/AZAPO collection, Box 14, Black Consciousness of Azania: BCM(A): A decade old.

UFH, NAHECS, BCM(A)/AZAPO Collection, Box 14, The Mission of AZAPO and the BCM(A), Speech delivered by Mosibudi Mangena at 7th Pan African Congress, Kampala, Uganda, 2-8 April 1994.

UNISA, Archival and Special Collections, *State v/s S. Cooper and others*, Case No. 18/175, 254, vol. 96, p. 5557.

University of South Africa (UNISA), Archival and Special Collections, Accession 127: SASO on the attack: An introduction to the South African Students Organisation, SASO Historical Background, p. 19.

UNISA, Archival and Special Collections, Accession 127: SASO Newsletter, November/December: Arts and Letters: Reviews, 'Yakhal'inkomo: Poems by Wally Serote', p. 14.

UWL HLP) A2176, (7.2), SASO Collection, 'Speech by Onkgopotse Tiro', 1972.

Wits, *Azanian People's Organisation: Constitution and Policy*, AZAPO/AZASM, File, B1-28, vol. 1, No. 2, 1987, p. 3.

Wits, Historical Papers, 'Delmas Treason Trial, 1985-1989: Constitution of the Azanian Students Movement', AK 2117-J-2-2-B12-001, p. 2.

II. OFFICIAL PUBLICATIONS

B. PERSONAL AND TELEPHONIC INTERVIEWS

Interview with E.S. Magashule conducted by Moses Mzwandile Hadebe, for ANC Oral History Project, n.d.

Interview with M.O.O. Molema conducted by Martha Mokoena, Bloemfontein, 9 October 2002, Free State Archives Oral History Project.

Interview with SDA Monareng conducted by Chitja Twala, Harrismith, 28 September 2004, SADET Oral History Project [Courtesy of the interview availed to me by Chitja Twala].

Interview with D.A. 'Papi' Kganare, conducted by Tsitso Challa and Hans Mosoeu, Bloemfontein, 9 August 2005, Free State Archives Oral History Project.

Interview with D.A. 'Papi' Kganare, conducted by Benjamin Mvumeni Makhubalo, Bloemfontein, 3 February 2006, SADET Oral History Project.

Interview with Z.P. Dlungwana conducted by Mohlomi Masooa, Bloemfontein, 28 March 2006, SADET Oral History Project.

Interview with M.E.S. Motlounng conducted by Chitja Twala, Vrede, 4 April 2008, SADET Oral History Project [Courtesy of the interview availed to me by Chitja Twala].

Interview with T.T. Mazibuko conducted by Chitja Twala, Harrismith, 19 April 2008, [Courtesy of the interview availed to me by Chitja Twala].

Interview with S. Dhlamini, M. Malindi and C. Mabitsela conducted by Tshepo Moloi, Sasolburg, 8 August 2011. [Courtesy of the interview availed to me by Tshepo Moloi].

Interview with I. Mkhabela, conducted by Masilonyane Lefuo, Johannesburg, 13 December 2016.

Interview with I. Moroe, conducted by Masilonyane Lefuo, Bloemfontein, 4 January 2017.

Interview with P. Senokoane, conducted by Masilonyane Lefuo, Bloemfontein, 20 February 2017.

Interview with Moloao, conducted by Masilonyane Lefuo, Bloemfontein, 15 September 2017.

Interview with M. Phekonyane, conducted by Masilonyane Lefuo, Bloemfontein, 16 September 2017.

Interview with R. Kgotseng, conducted by Masilonyane Lefuo, Bloemfontein, 26 September 2017.

Interview with L. Mosala, conducted by Masilonyane Lefuo, Bloemfontein, 19 October 2017.

Interview with S. Lenko, conducted by Masilonyane Lefuo, Bloemfontein, 20 October 2017.

Interview with S. Mokoena, conducted by Masilonyane Lefuo, Bloemfontein, 24 June 2018.

Interview with M. Duma, conducted by Masilonyane Lefuo, 28 October 2017.

Interview with P. Moloro, conducted by Masilonyane Lefuo, Bloemfontein, 20 November 2017.

Interview with S. Malebo, conducted by Masilonyane Lefuo, Bloemfontein, 10 January 2018.

Interview with I. Tshitlho, conducted by Masilonyane Lefuo, Bloemfontein, 28 February 2018.

Interview with F. Qithi, conducted by Masilonyane Lefuo, Bloemfontein, 20 May 2018.

Interview M.Z. Sekoere, conducted by Masilonyane Lefuo, Bloemfontein, 17 June 2018.

Interview with D. Mokgosi, conducted by Masilonyane Lefuo, Bloemfontein, 20 August 2018.

Interview with I. Mkhabela, conducted by Masilonyane Lefuo, Johannesburg, 26 March 2019.

Interview with M. Koenane, conducted by Masilonyane Lefuo, Bloemfontein, 10 June 2021.

III. SECONDARY SOURCES

C. CHAPTERS IN BOOKS

Alexander, N., 'The National Forum', in I. Liebenberg, F. Lortan, B. Nel, and G. van der Westhuizen (eds.), *The Long March: The story of the struggle for liberation in South Africa* (Pretoria: Penrose Book Printers, 1994), p. 199.

Chaskalson, M., Jochelson, K., and Seekings, J., 'Rent Boycotts and the Urban Political Economy', in G. Moss and I. Obery (eds.), *South African Review*, 4, (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1987).

Cherry, J., and Gibbs, P., 'The Liberation Struggle in the Eastern Cape', in South African Democracy Education Trust (ed.), *The Road to Democracy in South Africa*, vol. 2, (1970-1980), (Pretoria: UNISA Press, 2006), p. 569.

Denis, P. 'Clergy Training', in J. Brain and P. Denis (eds.), *The Catholic Church in Contemporary Southern Africa* (Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publication, 1992), pp. 124-150.

Goba, B., 'The Black Consciousness Movement: Its impact on Black Theology', in I.J. Mosala and B. Tlhagale (eds.), *The unquestionable right to be free: Essays in Black Theology* (Skotaville: Johannesburg, 1986), p. 66.

Hoeane, T., 'Struggling to represent the left: The Pan Africanist Congress, the Azanian People's Organisation', in J. Piombo and L. Nijzink (eds.), *Electoral Politics in South Africa: Assessing the first democratic decades* (HSRC Press: Cape Town, 2006).

Hyslop, J., 'School Student Movements and State Education Policy: 1972-87', in W. Cobbett and R. Cohen (eds.) *Popular Struggles in South Africa* (Africa World Press, 1988), p. 188.

Houston, G., and Magubane, B., 'The ANC political underground in the 1970s', in: South African Democracy Education Trust (ed.) *The Road to Democracy in South Africa, Volume 2, 1970-1980* (Pretoria: UNISA Press, 2006).

Jordaan, R., 'The emergence of Black Feminist Theology in South Africa', in D. Ackerman, J.A. Draper and E. Mashinini (eds.), *Women hold up half the sky: Women in the church in Southern Africa* (Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publisher, 1991), pp. 122-128.

Kunnie, J., 'Christianity, Black Theology and liberating faith', in I.J. Mosala and B. Tlhagale (eds.), *The unquestionable right to be free: Essays in Black Theology* (Johannesburg: Skotaville, 1986), pp. 153-168.

Langa, B.J., 'The creative arts – A statement for creativity and Black development', in B.J. Langa (ed.), *Creativity and Black development* (Durban: SASO Publications, 1973).

Legassick, M., and Saunders, C., 'Aboveground activity in the 1960s', in South African Democracy Education Trust (ed.), *The Road to Democracy in South Africa*, vol. 1, (1960-1970), (Cape Town: Zebra Press, 2004), pp. 679-683.

Legassick, M., and Shingler, J., 'South Africa', in D.K. Emmerson, *Students and Politics in Developing Nations*, p. 128.

Lekgoathi, S.P., '*Radio Freedom*, Songs of Freedom and the Liberation Struggle in South Africa (1963-1991)', in M.J. Grant and F.J. Stone-Davis (eds.), *The Soundtrack of Conflict: The role of music in radio broadcasting in wartime and in conflict situations* (Georg Olms Verlag: New York, 2013), pp. 111-129.

Lissoni, A., 'Student organization in Lehurutshe and the impact of Onkgopotse Abram Tiro', in A. Heffernan and N. Nieftagodien, *Students Must Rise: Youth Struggle in South Africa before and beyond Soweto '76* (Johannesburg: Wits University Press, 2016), pp. 34-44.

Maaba, B.B., 'The Black Consciousness Movement in the early 1990s: Perspectives on negotiations', in South African Democracy Education Trust (ed.), *The Road to Democracy in South Africa*, vol. 6, (1990-1996), (Pretoria: UNISA Press, 2013), pp. 1109.

Maimane, S., 'Black Theology and the quest for a God of liberation', in S.G. Devaney (ed.), *Theology at the end of modernity: Essays in honour of Gordon D. Kaufman* (Philadelphia: Trinity, 1991a), pp. 141-159.

Maluleke, T.S., 'Black Theology as a public discourse', in J.R. Cochrane (ed.), *Constructing a language of religion in public life: Multi-Event*, 1999 Academic Workshop Papers (Cape Town: University of Cape Town, 1998b), p. 61.

Maphai, V., 'The role of Black Consciousness in the liberation struggle', in I. Liebenberg, B. Nel, F. Lortan and G. van der Westhuizen (ed.), *The Long March: The story of the struggle for liberation in South Africa* (Pretoria: Penrose Book Printers, 1994), pp. 125-137.

Marks M., and McKenzie, P., 'Militarised Youth: Political Pawns or Social Agents?' in J. Cock and P. McKenzie, (eds.) *From Defence to Development: Redirecting military resources in South Africa* (Claremont: David Philip, 1998), p. 223.

Marx, A.W., *Lessons of struggle: South African Internal Opposition 1960-1990* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), p.114.

Mawasha, A.L., 'Turfloop: Where an idea was exposed, hijacked and redeemed', in M. Nkomo, D. Swartz and B. Moja (eds.), *Within the realm of possibility: From disadvantage to development at the University of Fort Hare and the University of the North* (Cape Town: HSRC Press, 2006).

Mbembe, A. 'Biko's Testament of Hope', in C. van Wyk (ed.), *We write what we like: Celebrating Steve Biko* (Johannesburg: Wits University Press, 2007), p. 135.

Mngxitama, A., Alexander, A., and Gibson, N.C., *Biko lives! Contesting the legacies of Steve Biko*, (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2008), p. 141.

Moloi, T., 'Black student politics in South Africa, 1990-1996', in South African Democracy Education Trust (ed.), *The Road to Democracy in South Africa*, vol. 6, Part 1, (1990-1996), (Pretoria, UNISA Press, 2013).

Moloi, T., 'Radio Freedom, Black Consciousness, and the struggle for liberation in South Africa', in S.P. Lekgoathi, T. Moloi, A. Romão Saúte Saíde, *Guerrilla Radios in Southern Africa: Broadcasters, Technology, Propaganda Wars, and the Armed Struggle*, (Rowman & Littlefield), pp. 184-281.

Mosala, I.J., 'The use of the Bible in Black Theology', in I.J. Mosala and B. Tlhagale (eds.), *The unquestionable right to be free: Essays in Black Theology* (Johannesburg: Skotaville, 1986c), pp. 175-199.

Mzamane, M.V., 'Early Black Consciousness Publications', in L. Switzer and M. Adhikari (eds.), *South Africa's Resistance Press: Alternative Voices in the last generation under apartheid* (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 2000).

Mzamane, M.V., Maaba, B.B., and Biko, N., 'The Black Consciousness Movement in South Africa, 1970-1980', in South African Democracy Education Trust (ed.), *The Road to Democracy in South Africa*, vol. 2, (1970-1980), (Pretoria: UNISA Press, 2006), pp. 99-101; 141.

Mzamane, M.V., and Maaba, B.B., 'The Azanian People's Organisation, 1977-1990,' in South African Democracy Education Trust (ed.), *The Road to Democracy in South Africa*, vol. 4, Part 2, (1980-1990), (Pretoria: UNISA Press, 2010), pp. 679-683.

Nattrass, G., *A short history of South Africa* (Johannesburg and Cape Town: Jonathan Ball Publishers, 2019), pp. 229-230.

Ndaba B., et al., *Black Consciousness Reader*, in B. Ndaba, T. Owen, M. Panyane, R. Serumula and J. Smith, *The Black Consciousness Reader* (Sunnyside: Jacana Media (Pty) Ltd, 2017), pp. 205-206.

Ndlovu, S.M., 'A brief history of the African Students' Association', in A. Heffernan and N. Nieftagodien, *Students Must Rise: Youth Struggle in South Africa before and beyond Soweto '76* (Johannesburg: Wits University Press, 2016), pp. 6-15.

Nel, B., 'The story of Black Theology of liberation in South Africa', in I. Liebenberg, F. Lortan, B. Nel, and G. van der Westhuizen (eds.), *The Long March: The story of the struggle for liberation in South Africa* (Pretoria: HAUM, 1994), p. 140.

Petlane, T., 'AZAPO, MF, PAC and UCDP: Searching for a role and fighting for survival', in R. Southall and J. Daniel (eds.), *Zunami! The South African Election of 2009* (Jacana Media: Johannesburg, 2009).

Rossouw, G.J., 'Essentials of apartheid', in W.J. Hofmyer, C.J.S. Lombaard, and P.J. Maritz, *Perspectives on Christianity*, Series 5, vol.1 (Pretoria: University of Pretoria Printers, 2001), p. 97.

Seekings, J., 'The origins of political mobilization in PWV Townships, 1980-84', in W. Cobbett and R. Cohen (eds.), *Popular struggles in South Africa* (London: Africa World Press, 1988), pp. 59-76.

Smith, J., 'The fight against the black comprador bourgeoisie: The story of AZAPO', in B. Ndaba, T. Owen, M. Panyane, R. Serumula and J. Smith, *The Black Consciousness Reader* (Sunnyside: Jacana Media (Pty) Ltd, 2017), pp. 178-179.

Tlhagale, B., 'Towards a Black Theology of labour', in C. Villa-Vicencio and J.W. De Gruchy (eds.), *Resistance and Hope* (Cape Town: David Philip, 1985), pp. 126-134.

Turok, B., 'Black Consciousness is not False Consciousness', in B. Turok, 'Strategic problems in South Africa's liberation struggle: A Critical Analysis', *Azania Frontline*, 3, August 1985, pp. 8-9.

Twala, C., and Seekings, J., 'Activist networks and political protest in the Free State, 1983-1990', in South African Democracy Education Trust (ed.), *The Road to Democracy in South Africa*, vol. 4, Part 1, (1980-1990), (Pretoria: UNISA Press, 2010), pp. 765-813.

Twala, C., 'The ANC and the politics of the Free State, 1990-1994', in South African Democracy Education Trust (ed.), *The Road to Democracy in South Africa (1990-1996)*, vol. 6, Part 1, (Pretoria: UNISA Press, 2013), pp. 264-315.

Twala, C., 'Survival politics by the Qwaqwa homeland government: Resistance and collaboration', in South African Democracy Education Trust (ed.), *The Road to Democracy in South Africa (1990-1996)*, vol. 6, Part 1, (Pretoria: UNISA Press, 2013), pp. 502-547.

Twala, C., 'Ga re ye go nna karolo ya Aforika Borwa': Thaba Nchu and the challenges of integration into the Free State, 1989-1994', in South African Democracy Education Trust (ed.), *The Road to Democracy in South Africa (1990-1996)*, vol. 4, Part 3, (Austin, Texas: Pan-African University Press, 2019), pp. 1979-2016.

Twala, C., 'The Qwaqwa Bantustan and the nuances of political transition and integration into the Free State Province, 1989-1996', in South African Democracy Education Trust (ed.), *The Road to Democracy in South Africa (1990-1996)*, vol. 4, Part 3, (Austin, Texas: Pan-African University Press, 2019), pp. 1957-1977.

D. BOOKS

Bell, T., and Ntsebeza, D.B., *Unfinished business: South Africa, Apartheid and Truth*, (Cape Town, Verso, 2001), p. 123.

Boesak, A.A., *Black Theology, Black Power* (Cape Town: Mowbrays, 1978), p. 6.

Bonner, P., and Nieftagodien, N., *Kathorus: A history* (Cape Town, Maskew Miller Longman, 2001), p. 59.

Bridger, E., *Young Women Against Apartheid: Gender, Youth and South Africa's Liberation Struggle*, (Woodbridge: James Currey, 2021), p. 6.

Chapman, R.D., *Student Resistance to Apartheid at the University of Fort Hare: Freedom Now, A Degree Tomorrow* (New York and London: Lexington Books, 2016).

Cornforth, M., *Science versus Idealism: In Defence of Philosophy against Positivism and Pragmatism*, (London: Lawrence and Wishart Ltd, 1955), p. 231.

Deutschmann, D., *Che Guevara: A New Society, Reflections for today's world*, (Melbourne: Ocean Press, 1991), pp. 126-129.

Fatton Jr, R., *Black Consciousness in South Africa – The dialectics of ideological resistance to white supremacy* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1986).

Gerhart, G.M., *Black Power in South Africa: Evolution of an Ideology*, (California: University of California Press, 1979), p. 298.

- Goba, B., *An agenda for Black Theology, Hermeneutics for social change* (Skotaville: Johannesburg, 1988).
- Grobler, J., *A Decisive Clash? A short biography of Black protest politics in South Africa, 1875-1976* (Pretoria: Acacia Books, 1988).
- Halisi, C.R.D., *Black political thought in the making of South African Democracy* (Indiana, 1999), p. 7.
- Heffernan, A. *Limpopo's Legacy: Student politics and democracy in South Africa* (Johannesburg: Wits University Press, 2019), p.127.
- Hesse-Biber, S.N., and Leavy, P., *The practice of qualitative research*, (Boston: SAGE, 2010), p. 375.
- Houston, G., *The National Liberation Struggle in South Africa: A case study of the United Democratic Front, 1983-87*, (Cape Town: HSRC, 1999).
- Houston, G., et al, *The other side of Freedom: Stories of hope and loss in the South African liberation struggle 1950-1994* (Cape Town: HSRC Press, 2017), p. 5.
- Jinadu, L.A., *Fanon: In search of the African Revolution* (London: Sydney and Henley, 1986), p. 28.
- Kane-Berman, J., *Soweto: Black Revolt, White Reaction* (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1978), p. 108.
- Kondlo, K., *In the twilight of the revolution: The Pan-Africanist Congress of Azania (South Africa), 1959-1994*, (Switzerland: Basler Afrika Bibliographien, 2009), pp. xi-xii.
- Kotze, H., and Greyling, A., *Political Organisations in South Africa, A-Z* (Tafelberg: Cape Town, 1991), p. 67.
- Lenin, J., *State and Revolution* (London: Aziloth, 1933), pp. 27-28.
- Liebenberg, B.J., and Spies, S.B., *South Africa in the 20th Century*, (Pretoria: Van Schaik, 1993), p. 458.
- Macqueen, I.M., *Black Consciousness and Progressive Movements under Apartheid* (Pietermaritzburg: KwaZulu-Natal Press, 2018), pp. 5; 41-45.

- Manganyi, N.C., *Being-Black-in-the-world* (Ravan Press: Johannesburg, SPRO-CAS, 1973), p. 29.
- Manganyi, N.C., *Looking through the keyhole: Dissenting essays on the Black experience* (Ravan Press: Johannesburg, 1981), p. 170.
- Mangu, X., *Biko: A Biography* (Cape Town: Tafelberg, 2012), p. 188.
- Mangena, M., *Quest for true humanity: Selected speeches and writings* (Bayakha Books: Johannesburg, 1996), p. 110.
- Mangena, M., *On your own: Evolution of Black Consciousness in South Africa/Azania*, p. 113.
- Mangena, M., *On Your Own: Evolution of Black Consciousness in South Africa/Azania*, (Braamfontein: Skotaville Publishers, 1989), pp. 113; 151.
- Manong, S., *If We Must Die: An Autobiography of a former Commander of Umkhonto we Sizwe*, (Johannesburg: Nkululeko Publishers, 2015), p. 119.
- Marcuse, H., *Soviet Marxism: A Critical Analysis*, (Vintage Books, 1961), pp. 121-124.
- Marcuse, H., *One-dimensional Man: Studies in the ideology of advanced industrial society* (Pacifica, CA: Marxists Internet Archive, 1964), p. xiv.
- Massey, D., *Under Protest: The rise of student resistance at the University of Fort Hare* (Pretoria: UNISA Press, 2010).
- Matthews, J., (ed.), *Black Voices Shout! An Anthology of Poetry* (Athlone: Blac Publishing House, 1974), p. 29.
- Moloi, T., *Place of Thorns: Black political protest in Kroonstad since 1976* (Johannesburg: Wits University Press, 2015), pp. 44-69.
- More, M.P., *Biko: Philosophy, identity, and liberation*, (Cape Town: HSRC, 2017), p. 142.
- Mosala, I., and Tlhagale, B., *The Unquestionable Right to be Free: Black Theology from South Africa* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbits Books, 1986), p. 13.
- Mosala, I.J., *Biblical Hermeneutics and Black Theology in South Africa* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989), p. 197.

- Motlhabi, M., *The theory and practice of Black resistance to apartheid: A social-ethical analysis* (Johannesburg: Skotaville, 1984).
- Ndlovu, S.M., *The Soweto Uprisings: Counter-Memories of June 1976* (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1998), p. xxiii.
- Pampallis, J., *Foundations of the New South Africa* (New York: Zed Books, 1991), p. 250.
- Pityana, B., Ramphela, M. Mpumlwana, M., and Wilson, L., (eds.), *Bounds of possibility – The legacy of Steve Biko and Black Consciousness* (Cape Town: David Philip, 1991).
- Pogrand, B., *Sobukwe and Apartheid* (Jonathan Ball Publishers, Johannesburg, 1990).
- Ramphela, M., McDowell, C., and Cock, J., *Restoring the Land: Environment and Change in Post-Apartheid South Africa* (London, 1991), p. 162.
- Ramose, M.B., *African Philosophy Through Ubuntu* (Mond Books, 1999), p. 37.
- Sapire, H., and Saunders, C., (eds.), *Southern African Liberation Struggles: New local, regional, and global perspectives*, (Cape Town: UCT Press, 2013).
- Seekings, J., *The UDF: A History of the United Democratic Front in South Africa, 1983-1991*, (Cape Town, Oxford, Athens: David Philip, James Currey and Ohio University Press, 2000), pp. 29-30;128-129.
- Service, R., *Trotsky: A biography* (Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2009), p. 314.
- Snail, M.L., *The Antecedence, and the Emergence of B.C.M. in South Africa*, 1993, p. 251.
- Stoler, A., *Along the Archival Grain: Epistemic Anxieties and Colonial Common Sense*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009), p. 3.
- Sono, T., *Reflections on the origins of Black Consciousness in South Africa* (HSRC: Pretoria, 1993), p. 72.
- Stubbs, A., *Steve Biko – I write what I like: A selection of his writings* (New York: Harper and Row, 1986).
- Tafira, H.K., *Black Nationalist Thought in South Africa: The persistence of an idea of liberation* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2016), p. 43.
- Till, C., *Biko: The Quest for True Humanity, Apartheid Museum*, p. 50.

Tiro, G., *Parcel of Death: The Biography of Onkgopotse Abram Tiro* (Johannesburg: Picador Africa, 2019), pp. 58-59.

Tomas, A., *Amilcar Cabral: The life of reluctant nationalist* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2022), p. 42.

Valela, Z., *Now you know how Mapetla died: The story of a Black Consciousness martyr* (Cape Town: Tafelberg, 2022), PP. 68-69.

Van der Westhuizen, C., *White Power and the Rise and Fall of the National Party* (Cape Town: Zebra Press, 2007), p. 103.

Van Kessel, I., *"Beyond our wildest dreams": The United Democratic Front and the transformation of South Africa* (Charlottesville and London: University Press of Virginia, 2000).

Walshe, P., *Church versus State in South Africa: The case of the Christian Institute*, (London: C. Hurst and Company: Orbis Books, 1983), p. 149.

Wilkins, I., and Strydom, H., *The Super-Afrikaners: Inside the Afrikaner Broederbond* (Johannesburg, Cape Town: Jonathan Ball Publishers, 2012), pp. 253-254.

Worden, N., *The making of Modern South Africa: Conquest, Segregation, and Apartheid* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1994), p. 117.

E. ARTICLES

Adam, A., 'The rise of Black Consciousness in South Africa', *Race*, 15(2), 1973, pp. 155-157.

Alexander, N., 'The National Question in South Africa', *Azania Worker, Special Edition*, 2(2), December 1985, p. 2.

Barrell, H., 'The United Democratic Front and National Forum: Their emergence, composition and trends', *South African Review*, 2(6/20), 1984, pp. 11-12.

Brown, J., 'An experiment in confrontation: The Pro-FRELIMO rallies of 1974', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 38(1), 2012, pp. 55-71.

- Dladla, N., 'The liberation of history and the end of South Africa: Some notes towards an Azanian historiography in Africa, South', *South African Journal on Human Rights*, 34(3), 2018, pp. 2018, pp. 461-417.
- Dolamo, R.T., 'The legacy of Black Consciousness: Its continued relevance for democratic South Africa and its significance for theological education', *HTS Teologie Studies/Theological Studies*, 73(3), 2017, p. 5.
- Gibson, N., 'Black Consciousness 1977-1987: The dialectics of liberation in South Africa', *Africa Today*, 35(1), 1988, pp. 5-26.
- Habib, A., 'The rise of Black Consciousness in South Africa', *Race*, XV, 1973.
- Hadfield, L., 'Christian Action and Black Consciousness Community Programmes in South Africa', *Journal for the Study of Religion, Public Faith and the Politics of Faith*, 23(1/2), 2010.
- Hirschmann, D., 'The Black Consciousness Movement in South Africa', *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 28(1), March 1990, pp. 1-22.
- Hlalele, D., 'Higher Education and the liberation struggle in the former Qwaqwa Homeland: A Freirean Approach', *Journal for Contemporary History*, 43(1), June 2018, pp. 178-195.
- Jordaan, R., 'The emergence of Black Feminist Theology in South Africa', *Journal of Black Theology in South Africa*, 1, 1987, pp. 42-46.
- Kossler, R., 'Images of history and the nation: Namibia and Zimbabwe compared', *South African Historical Journal*, 62(1), 2010, pp. 29-53.
- Kunene, P., 'The Crisis Committee, post-apartheid protest and political mobilisation in Phomolong Township, Free State', *New Contree*, 67, *Special Edition*, November 2013, pp. 98-118.
- Lekgoathi, S.P., 'The African National Congress's Radio Freedom and its audiences in apartheid South Africa, 1963-1991', *Journal of African Media Studies*, 2(2), 2010, pp.141-142.
- Magaziner, D., 'Christ in context: Developing a political faith in apartheid South Africa', *Radical History Review*, 99, 2007, pp. 80-106.
- Maluleke, T.S., 'Black and African Theologies in the New World Order: A time to drink from our own wells', *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa*, 96, 1996, pp. 3-19.

- Mangashe, P., 'Operation Zikomo: The armed struggle, the underground and mass mobilization in South Africa's border region, 1986-1990, through the experiences of MK cadres', *South African Historical Journal*, 70(1), March 2018, pp. 42-55.
- Matebesi, S., "A hungry stomach knows no allegiance": Transactional activism in community protests in Ficksburg', *Journal for Contemporary History*, 43(1), June 2018, pp. 242-261.
- Mbatha, N., 'Narratives of women detained in the Kroonstad Prison during the apartheid era: A socio-political exploration, 1960-1990', *Journal for Contemporary History*, 43(1), June 2018, pp. 91-110.
- Mbembe, A., 'Passages to Freedom: The politics of racial reconciliation in South Africa', *Public Culture*, 20(1), 2008, pp. 5-7.
- McDonald, S., 'A Guide to Black Politics in South Africa', *CSIS Africa Notes*, 36, 5 November 1984, p. 3.
- McKinley, D.T., 'Umkhonto We Sizwe: A critical analysis of the armed struggle of the African National Congress', *South African Historical Journal*, 70(1), March 2018, pp. 27-41.
- Molapo, B., 'On the national question', *The African Communist*, 66(3), 1976, pp. 82-93.
- Moloi, T., 'Bodibeng High School: Black Consciousness Philosophy and Student Demonstration, 1940s-1976', *South African Historical Journal*, 63(1), 2011, p. 102; 114-126.
- Moloi, T., 'The emergence and radicalisation of Black political formations in Kroonstad, 1915-1917', *New Contree: Special Edition*, 67, November 2013, pp. 167-186
- Moloi, T., 'Zamdela Township: The exploration of confrontational politics, early 1980s and 1990s', *Journal for Contemporary History*, 43(1), 2018, pp. 111; 120-136.
- Moodley, S., 'AZAPO', *Agenda, Special Issue: Emancipation and Liberation*, 7(10), 1991, p. 35.
- More, M.P., 'Biko: Africana Existentialist Philosopher', *Alternation*, 11(1), 2004, pp. 79-108.
- Mushonga, M., and Seloma, T., 'Women's voices, women's lives: Qwaqwa women's experiences of the apartheid and post-apartheid eras', *Journal for Contemporary History*, 43(1), June 2018, pp. 196-214.

- Mwaniki, M., 'Language politics and the struggle for the soul of the University of the Free State (UFS): A microcosm of the socio-political and economic struggles in the Free State Province through time', *Journal for Contemporary History*, 43(1), June 2018, pp. 215-241.
- Poewe, K., 'Theologies of Black South Africans and the rhetoric of peace versus violence', *Canadian Journal of African Studies*, 27(1), 1993, p. 43.
- Saunders, C., 'Liberation Struggles in Southern Africa: New Perspectives', *South African Historical Journal*, 62(1), 2010, p. 5.
- Saunders, C., 'SWAPO, Namibia's Liberation Struggle and the Organisation of African Unity's Liberation Committee', *South African Historical Journal*, 70(1), March 2018, pp. 152-167.
- Seekings, J., 'Political mobilisation in Tumahole, 1984-1985', *Africa Perspective: Agrarian struggles in South Africa – The Debate Continues*, 7(8), 1989, Pp. 105; 111; 144.
- Seekings, J., "Whose Voices? Politics and Methodology in the Study of Political Organisation and Protest in the Final Phase of the 'Struggle' in South Africa", *South African Historical Journal*, 62(1), 2010, p. 13.
- Seekings, J., 'South African Townships 1980-1991: An annotated bibliography', *Stellenbosch Research Unit for Sociology of Development*, University of Stellenbosch, 1992, p. 50.
- Seekings, J., "Trailing behind the masses": The United Democratic Front and Township politics in the Pretoria-Witwatersrand-Vaal Region, 1983-84", *Journal of Southern African Studies, Special Issue: Social History of Resistance in South Africa*, 18(1), March 1992, pp. 93-114.
- Twala, C., 'Winnie Mandela banishment house in Brandfort (Majwemasweu) – Its historical significance: 1977-1985', *South African Journal for Cultural History*, 22(2), November 2008, pp. 71-72.
- Twala, C., 'Student activism and contestation for political space at the former University of the North (Qwaqwa Branch), 1986-1996', *Journal for Contemporary History*, 43(1), 2018, pp. 137; 146-159.
- Walshe, P., 'Church versus State in South Africa: The Christian Institute and the resurgence of African Nationalism', *Journal of Church and State*, 19(3), October 1977, pp. 457-479.

West, G., 'The legacy of liberation theologies in South Africa, with an emphasis on biblical hermeneutics', *Studia Historiae Ecclesiasticae*, 36, July 2010, p. 157.

F. NEWSPAPERS/MAGAZINES

Durban News, 'Frelimo Secrecy', 25 September 1974.

Mthembu, K., 'One Azania, One Nation', *Pace*, September 1982, pp. 162-163.

South African Students Press Union Publication, Volume 6, No. 1, March 1986, p. 4.

Rand Daily Mail, 'Kruger to stop mass SASO rally', 24 September 1974.

Rand Daily Mail, 'Cheers and boos', 24 September 1974.

The Friend, 24 August 1976, p. 1.

The World, 'Black consciousness means a big change – witness', 25 November 1975, p. 2.

G. ELECTRONIC SOURCES

Smith, C.A., 'Radio Freedom: A history of South African Underground Radio',
<<https://theappendix.net/posts/2013/12/radio-freedom-underground-radio-in-south-africa?fbclid=IwAR0dXO4PzTJa-Eg1rM84mmYsMkzDh7Oyu8PSJOnzLztmK0LjrOBKVECFRmc>>2012.2023, (Accessed on 17 June 2022).

H. THESES AND DISSERTATIONS

Cameron, R.T., 'Some political, ecumenical and theological aspects of the history of the Federal Theological Seminary, 1963-1975', *MA Dissertation*, University of Cape Town, Cape Town, 1989.

Houston, W.J., 'A critical evaluation of the University Christian Movement as an ecumenical mission to students, 1967-1972', *M. Theology*, University of South Africa, Pretoria, 1997, pp. 18-22.

Houston, G., 'The United Democratic Front: A case study of democratic organisation, 1983-1987', *PhD Thesis*, University of Natal, Durban, 1998.

Kono, T.R., 'Marxism and Black Nationalism in South Africa (Azania): A comparative and critical analysis of the ideological conflict and consensus between Marxism and Nationalism in the ANC, the PAC and the BCM, 1920-1980', *PhD Thesis*, Brandeis University, 1982, pp. 254-255.

Kunene, P., 'From Apartheid to Democracy: A historical analysis of local struggles in Phomolong Township, Free State: 1985-2005', *MA Dissertation*, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, 2013.

Kritzinger, J.N.J., 'Black Theology – Challenge to Mission', *PhD Thesis* (Unisa: Pretoria, 1988), p. ii.

Matona, T., 'Student Organisation and Political Resistance in South Africa: An analysis of the Congress of South African Students, 1979-1985', *Hons Dissertation*, University of Cape Town, 1992.

Moloi, T.C., 'Black politics in Kroonstad: Political mobilization, protests, local government, and generational struggles, 1976-1995', *PhD Thesis*, Wits University, Johannesburg, 2012.

Mosala, I.J., 'Biblical hermeneutics and Black Theology in South Africa', *PhD Thesis*, University of Cape Town: Cape Town, 1987.

Ndlovu, A.S., 'The philosophical contribution of Robert Sobukwe and Steve Biko to the liberation struggle in South Africa', *MA Dissertation*, University of the Free State, Bloemfontein, 2022.

Ranuga, T.K., 'Marxism and Black Nationalism in South Africa (Azania): A critical analysis of the ideological conflict and consensus between Marxism and Nationalism in the ANC, the PAC and the BCM, 1920-1980', *PhD Thesis*, Brandeis University, 1983.

Rohanlall, L., 'Party Ideology in South Africa', *MA Dissertation*, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, 2014, p. i.

Seekings, J., 'Quiescence and the Transition to Confrontation: South African Townships, 1978-84', *PhD Thesis*, Oxford University, 1990.

Singh, P.B., 'The rise of Black Consciousness in South Africa: A presentation of the parameters of the movement and an empirical demonstration of political and cultural attitudes among non-

university Indian students’, *Post-Graduate Diploma in the Applied Social Sciences*, University of Natal, Durban, 1980, p. 3.

Vuma, S.L., ‘The role played by the University of the North student activism in the struggle against apartheid from 1968 to 1994’, *MA Dissertation*, University of Limpopo, Polokwane, 2018.

Vuma, S.L., ‘An historical examination of the evolution of student activism at the University of Limpopo (formerly known as the University of the North), 1968 to 2015, *PhD Thesis*, University of Limpopo, Polokwane, 2022.

I. PAPERS READ AT CONFERENCES/WORKSHOPS/SEMINARS

Alexander, N., ‘Race, Ethnicity and Nationalism in Social Science in Southern Africa’, *Paper presented at the 15th Annual Congress of the Association for Sociology in South Africa*, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, 3 July 1984.

Hadfield, L., ‘*Kwakungekhomkhethe* – There was no discrimination: Oral history and Black Consciousness Community Work in the King William’s Town Area’, *Paper presented at the 5th Oral History Association of South Africa Conference*, East London, 7-9 October 2008.

Mncube, B., ‘Biblical problems and the struggle of women’, *Paper presented at Women’s struggle in South Africa: Feminist Theology Conference*, Hammanskraal, 1984.

Moloi, T., ‘Political mobilisation in Maokeng Township, Kroonstad, 1980s’, *Paper presented at the ‘Local Histories and Present Realities’ Seminar*, University of the Witwatersrand, 25 February 2009, p. 27.

J. PAMPHLETS, SHORT PUBLICATIONS, BOOKLETS, BROCHURES, LETTERS, NEWSLETTERS, ETC

Denis, P., ‘Seminary training and black consciousness in South Africa in the early 1970s’ (unpublished).

M-Africa, A., *Touched by Biko: The Interviews*, 2017, p. 17.

M-Africa, A., *SASO: Newsletter. 50th Anniversary Edition*, 1970-1973, 1(1), 2019, p. 6.

Macqueen, I., *New perspectives on the history of Black Consciousness in South Africa* (unpublished).

Mafungo, V., 'Black Theology: A re-assessment of Christ', *SASO Newsletter*, 1(4), September 1972, p. 7.

Mbanjwa, Z.G., 'Struggle for justice and fullness of life: Catholic Social Teaching in Genesis and Development of South African Black Theology (With specific reference to Buti Tlhagane and Mandlenkosi Zwane), (unpublished), pp. 1-4.

SASO Newsletter, *Who is Black*, September 1970, p. 3.

SASO Newsletter, *The Politics of Powerlessness*, September 1970, p. 9.

SASO Newsletter, *Policy Manifesto of SASO*, 1972, p. 3.

Small, A., 'Blackness vs Nihilism', *SASO Newsletter*, August 1971.

Survey of Race Relations in South Africa, 33, 1979, p. 50.

The Star, 'Tiro's goal was black liberation', 4 February 1974.

K. RESEARCH REPORTS

Office of the Secretary-General – AZAPO – Circular No. 4/93.

LETTER FROM LANGUAGE EDITOR

Michelle Woolley

WRITER EDITOR PROOFREADER TRANSLATOR

Bachelor of Library and Information Science: B.Bibl.
Reference & Research Librarian
Bachelor of Arts Honours in Translation Studies and Editing

Associate Member of Professional EDITORS' Guild (PEG)

CERTIFICATE OF EDITING

This letter certifies that I have edited the Thesis detailed below.

Title:

THE AZANIAN PEOPLE'S ORGANISATION: AN ANTI-APARTHEID STRUGGLE,
BLOEMFONTEIN, 1978-1994

Author:

ELISHA MASILONYANE LEFUO

Regards
Michelle Woolley



Date: 8/8/2024

michellewoolley12@gmail.com
083 298 2077

Professional
EDITORS
Guild